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ABSTRACT

A Congressional hearing was held to consider: (1) the S.2034 To Authorize the Creation of a National Education Report Card To be consider: (1) the creation of a National Education Report Card to Schools and To Establish a National Council on Educational Goals, students and schools, and (2) the establishment of a National Council on Educational Goals. This document provides statements presented at this hearing concerning the National Education Report Card Act of 1990 (S. 2034). Prepared statements of D. P. Doyle and R. Mitchell are included. The introductory remarks of Senator J. Bingaman discuss educational assessment. S. Fuhrman of the Center for Policy Research in Education voices support for a National Council. Support for the national report card is provided by P. D. Forgione Jr., Connecticut State Department of Education. Statements by G. Ambach, Council of Chief State School Officers, and B. Honig, California Department of Education, are included. On September 10, 1990, the Subcommittee met again to discuss the formation of a National Council and the question of its independence from the political process. The following presenters' oral and prepared statements are provided: C. T. Cross, Office of Educational Research and Improvement; E. W. Clausen, American Association of School Administrators; M. C. Fricke, National School Boards Association; M. Waterman, National Parent Teacher Association; P. Kronkosky, Southwest Education Development Laboratory; and D. G. Stoner, Council for Educational Development and Research. A prepared statement from the National Education Association is also included. (SLD)

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S. Hrg. 101-1017

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION REPORT CARD ACT OF 1990

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HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND HUMANITIES OF THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES UNITED STATES SENATE ONE HUNDRED FIRST CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

S. 2034

TO AUTHORIZE THE CREATION OF A NATIONAL EDUCATION REPORT
CARD TO BE PUBLISHED ANNUALLY TO MEASURE EDUCATIONAL
ACHIEVEMENT OF BOTH STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS AND TO ESTAB-
LISH A NATIONAL COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL GOALS

JULY 23 AND SEPTEMBER 10, 1990

Printed for the use of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources

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THE NATIONAL EDUCATION REPORT CARD ACT OF 1990

MONDAY, JULY 23, 1990

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND HUMANITIES,
OF THE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:31 a.m., in room SD-430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Jeff Bingaman, presiding.

Present: Senator Bingaman.

Senator BINGAMAN. I'll go ahead and call the subcommittee to order.

I want to indicate that Senator Kerrey from Nebraska will also be joining us later.

Due to a family illness, Mr. Denis Doyle will not be with us today. He has prepared testimony and is submitting it for the record, and we will include it. In addition, Ruth Mitchell, who is the associate director of the Council for Basic Education, is not able to be here, and she is also submitting written testimony that we will enter in the record.

[The prepared statements of Mr. Doyle and Ms. Mitchell follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DENIS P. DOYLE, SENIOR FELLOW, THE HUDSON INSTITUTE

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, it is a pleasure to appear before you today to testify on S. 2034, the "National Education Report Card Legislation" you are considering.

A national education report card is an idea whose time has come; indeed, it is long overdue. If America is to remain competitive we need a set of indicators that will permit us to compare ourselves to ourselves—both interstate and intrastate—as well as to compare ourselves to the competition: Internationally.

Education is simply too important to ignore, and the failure to have a "national report card" is just that.

You will remember Thomas Gray's fateful line, "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." That is precisely where we find ourselves without a national education report card.

In the world of economics we have economic indicators; in the field of public health we have health indicators; in sports we have box scores.

In the business world it's called "benchmarking," an idea pioneered at Xerox and now widely used by high tech firms throughout the world to understand issues of both relative and absolute performance. Let me provide an illustration—Xerox benchmarks by comparing itself to the best makers of office machinery in the world—Canon, Sharp, and Kodak, for example—but also identifies the best in the field—regardless of what they make or do—to compare performance. The best example of inventory control that Xerox could find is L.L. Bean; the best example of quick response customer service is Florida Light and Power.

The importance of such indicators is twofold: It reminds us of what the best of the best are doing, but it does so without compelling us to copy them. Indicators of this kind are powerful precisely because they invite us to do our best by informing us about the larger world around us.

This concept has special relevance to the Federal role in education. The Tenth Amendment of the Constitution, the "Reserve Powers Clause," reserves for the States those powers not specifically enumerated in the Constitution. Education is such a power. It is for that reason that States are responsible for education; it is for that reason that the Federal role in education is conditional.

It is conditioned on the willingness of the States—or individual citizens—to participate as partners in the process. It is for that reason that Uncle Sam has no power to order States to behave in a certain way. As a consequence there never will be a national curriculum which is forced on unwilling States by an overbearing Federal Government.

I mention this obvious point to dispel any misplaced fears about the impact of a national education report card on local control of education. Far from having an adverse impact on local control, a properly crafted national report card can interact positively and beneficially with local control. As States and localities gain access to better information about education outcomes they will be better able to adjust their offerings to meet the competition, whether it is next door, across the country or around the world.

And they will be able to do so in the context of their own interests, resources and needs. For example, each school—each school—in the nation will want to be sure that its students read and write standard English and understand the concepts and applications of mathematics and science. But how that mastery is achieved should be the province of each school.

By way of illustration, few Americans are aware of the fact the Japanese elementary and secondary schools meet 240 days per year, compared to the U.S. average of 180 days. In terms of time alone, the Japanese youngster who earns a high school diploma will have spent four years and four days more in school—the equivalent of an American college degree.

Moreover, 96 percent of Japanese youngsters graduate from high school, compared to 72 percent in this country. No wonder they have some of the highest test scores in the world; no wonder they have the best educated work force in the world.

I do not hold the Japanese system up for emulation; it is unique to Japan and we could not copy it if we tried. But we can learn from it, just as the Japanese can—and do—learn from us.

It should be abundantly clear that if we are to meet world class education standards we will have to lengthen the school day and school year; but this is not a policy action that can be taken in isolation. It must be informed by evidence, and a national education report card will be an important part of that process.

In addition to the Japanese, let me turn briefly to our competitors across the Atlantic. The European Round Table of Industrialists has called for the creation of a "pan European Baccalaureate" degree for the new Europe 1992. As important as a pan European currency, a pan European bac will provide the basis for a common "intellectual currency." It will combine the highest standards of the 12 countries that will make up the new Europe plus one new requirement: To earn the degree, each student will have to demonstrate mastery of not one but three languages—the student's native tongue, English, and another European language.

Imagine, if you will, American school systems whose graduates are competent in one language.

If it is important to have a "national education report card," how that report card is designed and issued is equally important. A poor quality report card, or one that is politically or ideologically biased, would be worse than no report card at all.

Let me briefly turn to the bill before you, then. I have already spoken to the underlying concept—the idea is not only sound, it is overdue. An independent, bipartisan commission of the kind specified in S. 2034 provides the structure necessary for an independent and objective assessment of the Nation's education performance; the processes spelled out in the bill are reasonable ones; the appointment procedures are as well. There is, however, one singular omission in the list of ex officio members: The Secretary of Labor.

While the "national education report card" is obviously of interest to the Secretary of Education, it should be of no less interest to the Secretary of Labor. Indeed, now that we are well into the post-industrial society, firmly ensconced in the "knowledge" economy, it is essential that the Secretaries of Labor and Education become close collaborators.

Finally, let me say that the commission created by this legislation should be encouraged to go beyond—well beyond—the goals set by the governors and the White House in the historic education summit of last fall. Those goals are important, but they should not obscure the fact that there are other goals equally important, and that tomorrow's goals may differ significantly from today's. By way of illustration, I would suggest that two goals for the education system be identified immediately: One is to increase the productivity of the system. We must begin to get more "yield" out of the education dollars we are now spending. No study of national health goals, for example, could be silent on the question of cost containment; so too, education must become more efficient, both to get more yield out of existing expenditures and to gain more productivity from future increases in spending. Such measures will not only benefit students and their families, but will benefit the teaching profession as well.

Second, a serious assessment of the uses and applications of technology must be made; education is still in the 19th century technologically, and it must move into the 21st if it is to succeed.

Other witnesses will, no doubt, have other goals. Former Maryland Superintendent of Public Instruction, for example, has suggested that each child should have an "advocate," a notion I would be happy to second. My point is that the national education report card should be designed to change as the times change, and it should have the flexibility to report on such things as "child advocacy" and the extent to which, if at all, community service is required for graduation.

I will close with one final goal for the commission itself, and that is to suggest that if the commission is to succeed, it must keep it simple. Goals for American education should be easily understandable and plainly stated. And their implications should be spelled out, clearly and plainly. All Americans, for example, should be able to speak, read and write standard English to a level of proficiency that will permit them to understand a daily newspaper editorial, file a job application, enjoy prose and poetry, and perhaps most important, write a letter to a member of Congress.

To take only one of goals enunciated last fall—make America first in the world in science and mathematics. It is desirable and even attainable goal; but not if we continue "business as usual." Today's education configuration—low tech, short day, short year, low standards for teachers and students—simply will not get us from here to there. If the Commission is to be useful, it must provide guidance as well as a report card.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RUTH MITCHELL, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, COUNCIL FOR BASIC EDUCATION

EDUCATION INFORMATION: WHY? WHAT? HOW?

The collection of information about education arouses the same fears and anxieties which once faced kings who wanted to count their population in a census. Much the same reasons account for the apprehension: Fear of control in the form of bureaucratic invasions on time, money, and traditional modes of operation. The unique distribution of authority in U.S. education adds to the fears: Education is a local and State business, with the Federal role strictly limited, as it was in the original legislation establishing NAEP.

Nevertheless, the urgency of our educational crisis requires a national response and that means information on which to base policy. While supporting Dr. Ernest Boyer's proposal for a non-governmental National Council, I would prefer it to be named Education Information, rather than assessment. There is much more information beyond student achievement that needs to be included in a comprehensive picture of the Nation's schools. If there is an entity properly called "American education," then it needs a central data collection agency, with clearinghouse responsibilities and a continual openness to both the kinds of information needed and the means of collecting it.

We should also recognize that any national body which collects information about schools will be regarded by those in the field as a threat. They are right: There is no such thing as the objective collection of information. The categories which guide information gathering betray a set of values and the instruments, no matter how carefully crafted, will emphasize some kinds of information and shortchange others. (Multiple measures will increase accuracy but will also increase the expense and intrusion of data gathering.) It is almost impossible to dispel the impression that the feds want information so that they can mandate some addition to the curriculum or

outlaw some common sense procedure. The people who objected to the king's census correctly suspected what was coming: Taxes.

We should also remember the effect of the measure on the object measured. In education this translates into teaching to the test. There is no way to prevent this—it is human nature. The answer is to have a test worth teaching to. Multiple-choice, norm-referenced, machine-scorable tests don't satisfy that criterion, and there is a growing array of alternative measures (I call them performance assessments) which have potential to push curriculum and instruction towards thinking skills, creativity, and application of concepts. Five States have adopted performance assessments for their statewide student achievement information, but I am impressed with the grassroots activity I come across: An elementary school in Montana which evaluates how students learn art history and appreciation by recruiting parents to interview them about works of arts; a school in the Navajo nation in Arizona where portfolios and structured teacher observations are replacing the tests which did not reflect the children's sophisticated command of language.

Because of the profound effect of what national information is collected and the means of its collection, there is an obligation to use it as a tool for the improvement of education. As I have pointed out, data collection cannot be neutral. It must be used responsibly, bearing in mind the following three considerations:

1. *Measuring what really matters in education.*

Educational reform has not penetrated to the classroom to the degree we might have expected and is not likely to with the present focus on restructuring and choice. Schools and school districts have been restructured, site-based management has taken over from the district office, and you'd never know it to walk into a classroom. There are the same old workbooks, the desks (in rows) half-empty, the teacher standing at the front of the class, textbook in hand.

Measurement—be it what and how—must supply different information with different instruments in order to focus attention on what is needed to reach our national goals. We can boil these official goals down into three: Education should produce students who can contribute to a dynamically changing economy; discharge their duties as citizens by voting (at the least) and taking part in community affairs; and continue to learn throughout their lives.

Information about the quality of schools based on these goals should include, for example: The amount of time spent learning in cooperative groups; the amount of writing required in all classes, including mathematics; the replacement of textbooks with "real" books; to what extent applications of concepts are applied to everyday life.

Please note that I have not referred to subject-matter areas. The traditional divisions into mathematics, science, reading, writing, and so on are the next barriers to fall in U.S. education. Here are some of the signs. I cannot be present at this hearing this Monday morning because a group from the Council for Basic Education is consulting with Montgomery County, Maryland, school district officials about interdisciplinary programs. At the end of August, the Education Commission of the States will convene representatives of organizations such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the National Council on Social Studies which have published curriculum documents to a curriculum summit in Aspen, Colorado, to discuss connecting, coordinating, and consolidating the curriculum across all the disciplines. Senator Jeff Bingaman's own State, New Mexico, is the site of a revolutionary schoolwide interdisciplinary humanities program, Gateways, at Capital High School in Santa Fe; and it is also blessed by the presence of New Mexico CURRENTS, one of the nationwide network of interdisciplinary humanities projects under the aegis of the Collaboratives for Humanities and Arts Teaching (CHART), funded by the Rockefeller Foundation and operated in collaboration with the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities.

My point is that information about U.S. education must reflect both present activity in the classroom and progress towards desirable changes, such as the development of interdisciplinary education (including mathematics as well as writing across the curriculum). What really matters in education is what goes on in the interaction between teacher, students, and a topic they share. An information system that provides drop-out statistics, test scores, number of square feet of playground, and so on, misses the essential information by a mile.

2. *Who measures and how.*

The admiration expressed in State departments, legislatures, and in graduate schools of education for NAEP and NAEP-like instruments of measurement is disturbing. There is no doubt that NAEP is exemplary in its psychometric and report-

ing procedures and admiration is justified. However, as Philip Schlechty says in his important new book, *Schools for the 21st Century*:

Psychometric procedures have their place in the education enterprise, just as accounting procedures have their place in business. But businesses that are run by the accounting department usually fail, and I suspect that one of the reasons for our present distress in education is that we have too long allowed the psychometric interests to determine how our schools are led and evaluated (*Schools for the 21st Century*, p. 143).

NAEP instruments are mostly multiple-choice, although efforts are being made to incorporate some performance assessments (of inadequate length and complexity, in the opinion of many) which are more likely than multiple-choice to assess thinking skills. For as long as NAEP-like instruments are regarded as a model and adopted as the answer to information needs, there will be two related consequences: Multiple-choice machine-scorable tests will dominate, and the essential connection between curriculum and assessment will continue to be suppressed.

The division between curriculum and assessment is organizationally reinforced at every level, from State departments, to school districts which have testing directors and curriculum specialists in separate compartments, to graduate schools of education. The formal division is complete at the federal level: Assessment has a federal presence, but curriculum has none.

Yet the influence of assessment on curriculum and instruction is undeniable. What you assess is what gets taught, as Lauren Resnick says, and what isn't assessed doesn't get taught. If you assess discrete pieces of knowledge, memorized facts, by passive recognition—filling in bubbles with a number 2 pencil—then you will get teaching geared to rote learning. You will also get massive boredom; inadequate numbers of women and minorities in mathematics and science classes; and graduates who have to be trained to solve problems while on their jobs because they never learned in school. I recently asked a group of State Department people in New Mexico where in their ordinary lives they used multiple-choice: They could think of only two situations—driver's license examinations and choosing horses at the race-track.

Assessment should not be a top-down procedure imposed by outsiders, especially not by academic psychometricians. A State Department which has recently adopted performance assessment deliberately did not consult with its universities on measures, because they did not want measures of impeccable psychometric quality and trivializing curriculum impact.

Let this argument seem only negative, let me hasten to underline my earlier point that alternative assessments are growing like mushrooms across the educational landscape, and add that they are likely to be better measures of the interdisciplinary theme-oriented curricula which are on the horizon. The National Council on Educational Information should become a storehouse of different measurement techniques for varying situations. Psychometricians, too, have a vital contribution to make: Performance assessments present grading and reliability challenges which need the psychometricians' attention. What is not needed is for psychometricians to dictate the form of assessments.

3. Long-term commitment and openness to change.

I heartily endorse Dr. Boyer's recommendation that a National Council on Educational Information should expect to work for ten years on identifying, designing, and modifying information systems. I see no end to the need. The only sure thing we know about change is that it is accelerating and will continue to accelerate. A child entering kindergarten in a couple of months' time will graduate in 2003. By then, the collection of data may be accomplished by expert systems on massive interconnected computers, which take the information, learn from it, and ask for new data. The student may have graduated as a result of solving a problem on which she's worked for two years, partly at home in front of a computer screen, partly in the field where the problem is located, and partly in group reporting sessions in a school community.

A national educational information system must build in flexibility and response to change. If it does not, it will suffer the same obsolescence which now afflicts only too large a proportion of U.S. education. A national information agency which understands how data collection can influence the system can vitally help the schools move into the 21st century from their present 19th century mode.

[The prepared opening statement of Senator Bingaman follows:]

PREPARED OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR BINGAMAN

Senator BINGAMAN. This hearing will please come to order.

I would like to introduce Senator Kerrey from Nebraska who will be joining us this morning.

I would also like to state that, due to a family illness, Mr. Doyle will not be with us. He has submitted written testimony which will be entered into the record.

In addition, Ruth Mitchell, associate director for the Council of Basic Education, is unable to attend. She also has submitted written testimony which will be entered into the record.

Given this setting, I hope to have a very fruitful and more in depth consideration of the central issues surrounding a national education assessment or National Report Card.

Today our subcommittee is holding a hearing on what I believe is one of the important issues facing the Nation today, that is, the quality of children's education and the Federal Government's role in helping to improve education.

The Congress, the President, and the Nation's Governors are all presently attempting to address the issues of national goals and standards for educational excellence. The key questions that arise are what do we presently know about the performance of our students; what do we need to know, and what will we need to know in the future; what do we know about the performance of students in other countries, and what is the Federal Government's role in determining these facts.

Out of the Charlottesville Summit came a commitment to establishing a plan for developing and achieving national educational goals and standards. In order to fulfill this commitment, it is acknowledged that we need clear measures of performance; we need to issue annual report cards which substantively describe the educational progress of the nation's States, schools, and students.

In order to accomplish this we need to develop an educational information infrastructure capable of supporting these goals and standards, and in particular, capable of assessing them. It is pointless to develop goals without developing an interactive feedback system to assess them. Without a way of assessing our goals, how will we know if we have reached them?

Parents hear reports daily about how their children lack basic math and science skills, about how they cannot read or speak English correctly, much less a foreign language, and about how their children are well behind their international counterparts. Yet when these same parents seek specific information on what their children are learning or how they compare to students in neighboring districts or States, the type of comprehensive, useful, accurate information they seek is simply not available.

The type of information most parents receive is best described in a report by John Jacob Cannell, entitled, "The Lake Woebegone Report" in which he concludes that, "... 48 of the 50 States are still scoring above national norm on standardized, nationally normed achievement tests 2 years after the original Lake Woebegone study." Cannell goes on to say that this type of information leads parents to believe that their school and their State is not part of a Nation at risk. Clearly, this type of information which parents

are receiving about educational performance, does not reflect the current national concern and need for local action that is being espoused for educational and school reform.

Parents are more aware and more concerned about national results, the phrase school reform is seen almost daily in the press. There is reason to believe that the concern for national results may even be overshadowing the historically predominant concern for local control. This is particularly evident in large urban school districts and in many small rural districts where the educational needs of children don't appear to be met very well. When we talk of educational reform because the educational needs of children are not being met we are implicitly referring to assessment.

We must not forget that any rebuilding or reform effort must first begin with a firm foundation—a baseline—from which growth can be accurately charted. It is my opinion that the assessment of educational performance is one of the crucial issues in the debate about school reform.

In hearings held last fall to examine education assessment with regard to the national goals Ms. Patricia Graham, dean of the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University, said, "Assessment is what ultimately drives curriculum and pedagogy—that is how children are going to perform on tests is a big factor influencing what is taught and how it is taught." In the same panel, Chester Finn, professor at Vanderbilt University, said, "We know a fair amount about the country as a whole. What we don't know very much about are the States in relation to each other and the country in relation to other countries."

As indicated by the testimony at the last hearings there is not enough data to make State-by-State comparisons in anything but math based on this year at the eighth grade level. Yet, if parents are to get more involved, as Secretary Cavazos thinks they should be, then the school district will need accurate information about how their school district is doing or how their school is doing. If parents are given inaccurate information they can't be blamed for not being sufficiently concerned about the quality of education.

One role, with respect to the Federal Government, about which there is agreement, is that of assessing the performance of students and trying to determine the information necessary to make good policy with regard to education. State officials want more information. It is my opinion, that while there is a window of opportunity to cooperate more fully with States in the education process, we ought to take advantage of the opportunity and provide that information as quickly as possible. We need effective and direct ways to measure education goals so that our policy makers both at the Federal and the local level can begin to effectively and substantively think about improving the quality of American education. As Mr. Doyle so aptly phrases it; "The issue . . . at the national level is to find out what we think people should know and to measure it to the extent which we think we know it in some useful and capable way."

In my opinion, we need to ask whether or not the current information mechanisms used to gather information about education performance are well designed and well managed, whether they ask the appropriate questions and whether they provide policy

makers at all levels with reliable, comprehensive information on the education of our children. We will never know whether the goals that are to be established are being achieved if we do not first have a clear, comprehensive, and uniform mechanism for measuring our children's educational progress.

We currently have no effective way of measuring school performance. The National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) is a voluntary program. States do not have to participate in this biennial testing program if they choose not to. In addition, NAEP was never authorized, until last year, to make state-wide comparisons. Currently, Federal law prohibits the States, not to mention the Department of Education, from using any State data to compare schools or districts.

We need to get serious about establishing agreement on reasonable criteria, measured appropriately, that will allow us to make accurate judgments about the nation's schools.

Leadership needs to be asserted in order to establish standards and to inspire schools. Leadership needs to be asserted in order to determine the agenda to implement the already established goals in a responsible manner. It is reprehensible to talk about how important education is and the urgency to do something positive about the current state of education—and then not to act.

Given that there is agreement about the need for establishing accurate assessments of school performance and given that there is consensus that the American education system is in a state of crisis, generally speaking, let me ask each of you to consider the following:

What are your thoughts about establishing a national commission as an appropriate impetus for getting us moving immediately in the direction of establishing national performance standards?

What are your thoughts about the process outlined in the bill? Is it appropriate and if not why not?

What are your thoughts about the cost factors involved in attempting to establish national performance standards or what are your thoughts about the cost factors involved in implementing a study to consider appropriate ways of assessing educational performance?

Why hasn't there been a prior concerted effort to address the issue of national assessment of school performance?

What are your thoughts about who should be taking the lead in addressing this issue and why?

Although we don't have as many witnesses as we had expected, I think we do have a good opportunity to pursue some of the central issues surrounding a national education assessment or a national report card.

The subcommittee is holding a hearing on what I believe to be one of the most important issues facing the Nation today, and that is, how to improve the quality of education and what role the Federal Government needs to play in that effort.

The President, the Nation's Governors and the Congress are all presently attempting to address the issues of the national goals and standards for educational excellence. The key questions that arise are what do we presently know about the performance of our students, what do we need to know, what will we need to know in the

future, what do we know about the performance of students in other countries, and what should the Federal Government's role be in determining these facts.

Out of the Charlottesville Summit came a commitment to establish a plan to develop and achieve national education goals and standards. In order to fulfill this commitment, it is clearly acknowledged that we need measures of performance, we need to issue annual report cards which substantively describe the educational progress of our Nation's States and schools and students.

In order to accomplish this, we need to develop an educational information infrastructure which is capable of assessing progress toward these goals.

Obviously, it is pointless to develop goals without developing a feedback system to assess those goals and the progress toward them. The parents of the country I think are at a disadvantage. They hear the problems about education in our country relative to other countries; at the same time, when they seek specific information about their own children and how they are performing, the information oftentimes is very favorable.

The type of information that most parents receive is best described in a report that John Jacob Cannell issued, entitled "The Lake Wobegone Report", in which he concluded that 48 of the 50 States are scoring above the national norm on standardized, nationally normed achievement tests. Cannell goes on to say that this type of information leads parents to believe that their school and their State is not part of the Nation at risk.

We had hearings last fall in the Governmental Affairs Committee to examine educational assessment with regard to the national goals, and Ms. Patricia Graham, Dean of the Graduate School of Education at Harvard, said "Assessment is what ultimately drives curriculum and pedagogy—that is, how children are going to perform on tests—is a big factor influencing what is taught and how it is taught."

Chester Finn, a professor at Vanderbilt, said, "We know a fair amount about the country as a whole; what we don't know very much about are the States in relation to each other and the country in relation to other countries."

One role with respect to the Federal Government about which there is agreement is that of assessing the performance of students and trying to determine the information necessary to make good policy in education. In my view, we need to seriously pursue establishing reasonable criteria, measuring progress appropriately, and allowing us to make judgments on what more we need to do in our schools.

Let me just mention a few of the questions that I hope we can address. What are your thoughts, each of you, about the need for establishing a national commission? Is that an appropriate impetus for getting us moving in the direction of establishing performance standards? What are your thoughts about the process that we outlined in the bill that is being considered here? What are your thoughts about the cost factors involved in attempting to establish national performance standards, and why has there not been a prior concerted effort to address the issues of national assessment more completely?

Any other thoughts you have about the way we ought to proceed would be greatly appreciated.

We will start with Dr. Susan Fuhrman, who is director of the Center for Policy Research in Education at the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers; a professor of education at Rutgers University; and a school board member at Westfield in New Jersey.

Why don't you go ahead and start?

STATEMENT OF SUSAN FUHRMAN, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR POLICY RESEARCH IN EDUCATION, EAGLETON INSTITUTE OF POLITICS, RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ

Ms. FUHRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator, and I appreciate the opportunity to testify today.

The Center for Policy Research in Education that I direct is a consortium of Rutgers University where I am located, Michigan State University, Stanford University, and the University of Wisconsin. We are supported by the U.S. Office of Educational Research and Improvement at the Department of Education, and our mission is to study State and local policies to improve schooling.

So my remarks today about how national progress might be tracked draw on our research at how States and localities are tracking their own educational progress.

I would like to direct my testimony to two elements today—first, some comments on the concept of a national council or a national commission, and second, some comments on the potential activities of such a council.

I heartily endorse the notion of an independent council of recognized experts to oversee the development and reporting of information about progress toward reaching national education goals. I do this for three reasons.

First, I think the creation of a council, of a new and respected structure, will keep the momentum focused on educational reform and improvement. It will keep the discussion going. And there are models that we can draw on that inform us in this regard. I think of the South Carolina Business Education Subcommittee, for example, a new structure established in the wake of education reform, composed of respected leaders in the State—business, educators, political leaders—who have stayed relatively stable through overlapping membership and have kept the public attention focused on educational reform. These are leaders who reflect the view that education reform need not be judged by the appearance of a new bill or a new set of policies each year, but that attention is still focused on the issue by the most respected leaders in the State.

Another model might be the Advisory Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, which has kept discussion about federalism going since its inception in 1959 and has proved to be a valuable resource for everyone interested in public policy.

Second, I think that the council would provide an institutional memory about education issues. One of the serious problems we have in education policy and probably in many other areas of policy as well is fragmentation. Education policy is characterized by frequent shifts in direction; multiple, unconnected policies; sometimes policy efforts that directly counteract one another. This

is not just across levels of government, but at any one level of government. Policies tend to come in bundles and layers, without regard for fit. We adopted a project approach where each new problem is treated as a separate issue, with a separate pot of money and a separate set of attendant regulations. We have really failed to develop a coherent policy direction in behalf of educational improvement.

I think that the establishment of a council can take us along the road toward more coherent policy, a stable group of people with overlapping membership who can focus on the long-term and keep our eye on the directions that are set over a long period of time.

Third, I like the notion of the council's independence. I find that an appealing notion. I think politically it is important that this group be independent, that it be composed of respected experts, as the bill indicates, and furthermore I think it is particularly important to have a freestanding, autonomous group with regard to education because it is such an effort that is so dependent on intergovernmental cooperation, and I think that a freestanding council that represented State and local perspectives would have much more credibility than an agency or department or a division attached to any branch of the Federal Government without representing those State and local perspectives that are so important in education.

I now turn to the responsibilities of the national council. It seems to me that we must treat the statements of the President and the Governors as the beginnings of a complete goal-setting process in education and as only the beginning. Much remains to be done.

Among the activities that the national council could undertake are the following: Suggesting implementation strategies; setting quantitative targets—we have no targets in any of these goals yet except for the year 2000, no idea about how we are going to get there, when, and what are the intermediate steps—time lines; determining which measures to use; encouraging the development of new measures when they are indicated; encouraging parallel goal-setting and monitoring activities at the State level; determining if the goals need modification.

All these, along with reporting progress on the measures, I think are legitimate activities for this council. So I think it is important, and I concur with the bill's language that the council's role should be multifaceted and wide-ranging.

I would like to focus for a moment on three aspects of the council's charge. The first concerns measuring educational performance. I know that you have and will hear a lot about the sorry state of American testing, the fact that testing has exploded. In fact we have just completed as part of our research on educational reform visits to over 20 school districts in six States that we have been visiting since 1986 to determine how reform is affecting them, and the responses we get are that the most salient education reform issue, the thing that has changed the most in these districts since 1983 is increased testing, and specifically for two uses, which are becoming much more widespread, for educational accountability, for holding schools and school personnel accountable, and also for reporting to the public.

Testing used to be used primarily to diagnose student needs. Now it is being used much more for these other two purposes, and there

is much, much more of it. Yet there is a lot of dissatisfaction among test experts particularly about the kinds of tests we are using, that they test trivial forms of achievement, they measure achievement in little skill bits, and that we are not getting measures of true understanding and learning.

So, although we have too much testing because of the dominance of standardized and multiple choice tests, we have little access to systematic information about what students really know and are capable of doing with their school learning. And I would hope that a major task for this Nation and potentially for the national council is to oversee the development of first rate state-of-the-art assessments in key subject areas.

Developing new and challenging types of assessments built on sophisticated notions of teaching and learning will be expensive, but not nearly as expensive as the cost of letting standardized tests drive our curriculum away from the kind of learning we would like to see occur.

I am told by Her Majesty's inspectors, some of whom I have been meeting with, that Great Britain is spending 100 million pounds on assessment development. And this Nation has at least as much at stake in developing good measures of student learning.

It is important to note that student performance is not the only area where we have inadequate measures. We have even poorer measures of school processes and practices than we do of student learning, and without better indicators of factors such as the nature and quality of the curriculum and the quality of teachers, it will be very difficult to track progress on factors that influence performance.

For example, the most prevalent measure of the nature of the high school curriculum is student course-taking. Many States just collect the numbers of credits that students are taking in subjects, say, math and science. More and more, States are collecting information on what courses they are taking, such as algebra and biology. But we know that the content and pedagogy of algebra can differ drastically from classroom to classroom, from school to school, from district to district, from State to State; and just the title, Algebra, Algebra I, Algebra II tells us very little about the nature and the quality of that curriculum that students are being exposed to and participating in.

Our center is now engaged in a major National Science Foundation study of the content of several courses in math and science which grew in enrollment as a result of higher State graduation requirements. The titles of these courses—titles like Informal Geometry and Math Application—give very little information about the nature and quality of these courses, except that we know they tend to be rather basic and general in nature and not as academic as reformers hoped.

Therefore I hope that the national council can encourage and oversee the development of better measures in the area of school practice as well as in the area of school achievement.

If progress toward national goals were simply a matter of developing new measures and reporting scores, then an independent national council would be an attractive but not a compelling idea. However, I think that part of the goal endeavor is suggesting im-

plementation strategies and noting if the goals need modification. If we take this wide-ranging, multifaceted view of the council's responsibilities, then its independence becomes even more important.

These aspects are really critical, and I think they are critical for two reasons. One is that we have very little evidence that simply reporting information about school performance spurs improvement. I have just reviewed a study of the Illinois School Report Card which noted that reporting performance to the public did not generate any significant pressure on school officials.

Let me quote: "There was remarkably little direct pressure on school officials from parents concerning the report card. Principals and superintendents were more likely to report a modest number of inquiries from parents in communities with better-educated populations. Pressure from business leaders was almost nonexistent."

As a school board member I can tell you that we had virtually no parent reaction or interest in the first school report cards published in New Jersey last fall even though there were interesting and significant differences from school to school within the district. So simply reporting measures is not enough.

Second, we know that the goals as stated are extremely ambitious and that simply noting how far short we fall, for example, from being first in the world in math and science, will not help us get there.

The council can serve a very useful role by calling attention to the kind of research, development and policy approaches we will need to move our entire system toward the goals.

It has been said that we have many pockets of excellence in this country. We have many schools that are doing exceedingly well. What we don't have is a coherence approach to moving all schools toward excellence. And I think that the council can play a leading role in recommending strategies suggested by its monitoring efforts.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to testify, and I will be glad to answer questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Fuhrman follows.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MS. FUHRMAN

My name is Susan Fuhrman, Director of the Center for Policy Research in Education and I thank the members of the Subcommittee on Education for the opportunity to testify today. The Center for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) is one of 21 Research and Development Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Our center is a consortium of Rutgers University, where I am located, Michigan State University, Stanford University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Our mission is to study State and local policies to improve schooling. Some of our research concerns how States and localities monitor their educational progress and those studies form a foundation for my remarks on how national progress may be tracked.

My testimony will be divided into two sections: Comments on the concept of a National Council on Educational goals and comments of the potential activities of such a council.

I endorse the notion of an independent council of recognized experts to oversee the development and reporting of information about progress toward reaching national education goals for three reasons. First, the creation of a council, of a new and respected structure, will keep the momentum focused on education reform and improvement. This is especially so since the council would be composed of distinguished and recognized leaders. The model of creating a new entity for studying and reporting on policy issues has been used successfully at both State and federal

levels to keep attention focused on an important policy area. I think of the Business Education Subcommittee in South Carolina. That committee, composed of respected political, business and educational elites, was established after the 1984 Education Improvement Act to oversee South Carolina's education reform. It has functioned to keep the public focused on education through periodic reporting. Of particular importance, monitoring of reform led to recommendations of fine-tuning and improvement in reform when necessary. The committee had the legitimacy and authority to make these recommendations. I also think of the Advisory Committee on Intergovernmental Relations which, since its founding in 1959, has promoted discussion about federalism, kept Congress and the public focused on intergovernmental relations and provided a valuable resource for everyone interested in public policy.

Second, the council would provide an institutional memory about education issues. For a number of reasons, including the fact that electoral cycles drive political leaders to focus on the short-term rather than the long-term, education policy is characterized by frequent shifts in direction, multiple unconnected policies, and policy efforts that often directly contradict one another. The fragmentation of education policy is one reason why we have failed to significantly improve education in this nation over the last decade, despite serious attention, energy and fiscal commitment to reform. Now that we have reached agreement on the serious problems we face and at least some degree of consensus on the components of improvement—such as increasing school readiness, improving performance and reducing drop-outs—it is very important to keep us focused on those directions over the long-term. A council with stable or overlapping membership could keep us focused over the long-term. The national goals process is too important an endeavor to be treated as a "project" that will end when current promoters move on to something else or leave office. National goals cannot be subject to shifts in political leadership or changing fashion.

Third, the council's independence is an appealing notion. Reports emanating from a clearly autonomous and distinguished panel could not be dismissed as fodder for political advantage. Furthermore a free-standing council could represent education's intergovernmental partners in the way no body attached to any branch of the Federal Government could. I would hope that the council would represent the perspectives of State and local educators and policymakers, enhancing its credibility in their eyes.

I now turn to the responsibilities of the National Council. It seems to me that we must treat the statements of the President and the Governors as the beginnings of a complete goal-setting process in education. While all of goals represent worthwhile objectives; none of them yet embodies or is accompanied by a specific strategy of how we will get from here to there. Some of the six goals they developed have quantitative targets; some do not. None have timeliness other than mention of the Year 2000. We do not yet know how we will measure each of the goals. We do not have sufficient measures for each of the goals, or for assessing other factors that will influence our progress toward the goals. We do not know if the goals may need modification over time. We have not reviewed our policy approaches to see where they can be improved to assure progress toward the goals. We have not sufficiently encouraged the States to set similar goals and report on their progress. All of these activities. Suggesting implementation strategies; setting quantitative targets; developing timeliness; determining which measures to use; encouraging the development of new measures; encouraging parallel activities at the State level; determining if the goals need modification—along with reporting progress on the measures—are legitimate activities for this council. I believe that the language of the bill is perfectly consistent with this view of the council's role as multifaceted and wide-ranging.

I would like to focus for a few moments on specific aspects of the council's charge. The first concerns measuring educational performance. As many observers of education reform have noted, it appears that the last thing we need in this nation is more testing. However, testing is currently much more prevalent than it is useful in terms of telling us what students really know.

Testing has increased significantly in the context of many different types of educational reform. Its growth has been incremental and piecemeal. In a given school, district, or State, each new test seems justifiable but the sheer volume of testing in a given locale can create a bewildering, and sometimes dysfunctional, amalgam of demands and influences. In our Center, we have just completed a final round of field visits to over 20 districts in 6 States that we have been studying since 1986 to see how reform is affecting them. It is clear that the most salient reform issue to local educators is increased testing, particularly the expansion of testing for two purposes beyond the more traditional purpose of diagnosing student needs: (1) To

hold schools, and school personnel, accountable for performance, and (2) to report to the public on school progress.

Teachers frequently complain that testing is consuming ever greater amounts of instructional time, impinging on their professional autonomy, and providing little useful information in return. Principals and administrators often feel unfairly evaluated and held accountable for results over which they have limited control. Test experts contend we are testing for trivial forms of achievement, measuring student achievement on little skill bits, and not getting measures of true understanding and learning.¹ As a result of these concerns, we are now witnessing a backlash against standardized tests and calls for new ways to think about and assess achievement and educational productivity.

So, although we have too much testing, because of the dominance of standardized multiple choice tests we have little access to systematic information about what students really know and are capable of doing with their school learning. A major task for this nation, and potentially for the National Council, is to oversee the development of first-rate state of the art assessments in key subjects. As the National Governors' Association Goals Statement notes, a first step is determining what students need to know. Then high quality assessments can be developed around those content outcomes.

Developing new challenging types of assessments built on sophisticated notions of teaching and learning is an expensive undertaking, although not nearly as expensive as the costs of letting standardized tests drive our curriculum away from the kind of learning we would like to see occur. I am told that Great Britain is spending 100 million pounds on assessment development; this nation has at least as much at stake in developing good measures.

It is important to note that student performance is not the only area where we have inadequate measures. We have even poorer measures of school processes and practice than we do of student learning, and without better indicators of factors such as the nature and quality of the curriculum and the quality of teachers it will be very difficult to track progress on factors that influence performance. For example, the most prevalent measure of the nature of the high school curriculum is student course-taking by subject. Many states can only track how many credits in a subject (e.g., math or science) students take. An increasing number can track enrollment by course title, like Algebra or Biology. However, the content and pedagogy of Algebra can differ drastically from classroom to classroom, school to school, district to district, State to State. Algebra, when taught as the prerequisite to higher level, college preparatory mathematics, is very different from algebra taught as a terminal course to lower-achieving students. CPRE is now engaged in a major NSF-funded study of the content of several courses in math and science which grew in enrollment as a result of higher State graduation requirements. The titles of these courses—Informal Geometry and Math Applications—give very little information about the nature and quality of these courses. Therefore, I hope that the National Council can encourage and oversee the development of better measures in the areas of school practice, as well as in the area of student achievement. Certainly it can call attention to our measurement, research and data needs.

If progress toward national goals were simply a matter of developing new measures and reporting scores then an independent national council would be an attractive but not compelling idea. However, as noted above, part of the goal endeavor is suggesting implementation strategies and noting if goals need modification. This aspect of making progress toward the goals is critical because developing measures and reporting progress to the public are insufficient in and of themselves. Reporting progress—or lack thereof—toward national goals will not necessarily spur improvement for two reasons. First, reporting performance measures to the public does not necessarily generate any significant pressure on school officials. A study of the Illinois School Report Cards concluded that: "That was remarkably little direct pressure on school officials from parents concerning the report card. Principals and superintendents were more likely to report a modest number of inquiries from parents in communities with better-educated populations. . . . Pressure from business leaders was almost non-existent."² As a school board member, I can tell you that we had

¹ D. Archbald and F. Newmann, 1988, *Beyond Standardized Testing: Assessing Authentic Academic Achievement in the Secondary School*. Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.

² J. Cibulka, "Educational Accountability Reforms: Performance Information and Political Power," to appear in S. Fuhrman and B. Malen, eds., *The Politics of Curriculum and Testing*. Forthcoming. Philadelphia, PA: Falmer.

virtually no parent reaction or interest in the first school report cards published by the State of New Jersey last fall, even though there were interesting differences among schools in the scores. Second, we know that the goals as stated are extremely ambitious and that simply noting how far short we fall, for example, from being first in the world in mathematics and science, will not help us get there. The council can serve a very useful role by calling attention to the kind of research, development and policy approaches we will need to move our entire system toward the goals. It's been said that we have many pockets of excellence in this country. We have many schools that are doing exceedingly well. What we do not have is a coherent approach to moving all schools toward excellence. The council can play a leading role in recommending strategies suggested by its monitoring efforts. If it is to play such a role, then its balance, independence and expertise become that much more important.

In summary, the idea of an independent council with authority to encourage and monitor progress toward national goals is a good one. Both its independence and the wide-ranging nature of its suggested activities are worthy notions. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you very much.

Before I go to questions of the witnesses, let me ask each to go ahead and speak. Let me next call on Mr. Pascal Forgione, who is division director of the Division of Research, Evaluation and Assessment with the Connecticut State Department of Education, and chairperson of the National Education Statistics Agenda Committee of the National Forum on Educational Statistics. He is from Hartford, CT—or, that's the location of the entity.

Mr. Forgione is responsible for the administration of Connecticut's statewide student and teacher assessment programs as well as the evaluation of all major State and Federal compensatory programs. He holds several leadership positions including chair of the National Education Data Agenda Committee, which I mentioned, and chair of the Conference of Directors of State Assessment Programs, and cofounder of the State Assessment Advisory Group of the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

I think that is a reasonably complete list. Go right ahead, Mr. Forgione.

STATEMENT OF PASCAL D. FORGIONE JR., PH.D., DIVISION DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF RESEARCH, EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT, CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, AND CHAIRPERSON, NATIONAL EDUCATION STATISTICS AGENDA COMMITTEE, NATIONAL FORUM ON EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS, HARTFORD, CT

Mr. FORGIONE. Thank you, Senator.

I am pleased to join you in this hearing. I have submitted written testimony as well as a compendium of resources. It is my expectation that you will be about this topic for some time, and I wish to have your staff aware of some of the wonderful things that are happening, so throughout the presentation I may reference that, but I keep that on the record.

I will focus my comments primarily on the issue of the National Education Report Card. Candidly, my knowledge base and understanding are very limited with regard to Federal mechanisms for the council mechanism. So therefore I feel that in my two colleagues you should get some good criticism of that, and I will give you some criteria to kind of think about, but I'm really not sure of that area.

In my testimony I focus on 6 questions related to the report card, and I would like to briefly review that. I characterize my testimony as one of a reflective practitioner. I work in the trench. I am trying to make education better for children and the American public and the citizens of Connecticut. So that is, I think, a little difference in the perspective.

The first question that I raise is: Is there a need for a national education report card? And I strongly endorse the intention of Senate Bill 2034 to create the national education report card to measure the achievements of both students and schools.

Based on our extensive Connecticut experience—we have been about serious assessment for over a decade, and as Susan mentioned, I have been in place there, and that helps to build a knowledge base of understanding because you really learn by doing. This is not intuition. It is an experiential arena that experience can make your activities better.

As I point out on page 2 of the testimony, I believe the challenge is can we design and develop tests, or more broadly, measure the report card, that reflect both adequate content and acceptable standards. I am worried that we are going to get into reporting statistics in looking at change without ensuring that the measures are indicators of worthwhile performance. That is very important because the measurement community is a young community. We are growing to be with you to make the public understand that we wish to be accountable. However, the quality of those measures are very uneven, as Susan has pointed out, and we need to be very critical because we have a lot at stake.

Tests do change behaviors. They are either going to help you do the right thing, or they are going to constrain you and deflect you away from good understanding. We want tests that give teachers the right thing to do so that they can improve and enhance learning, not be an exercise that tomorrow you do something different.

As you go about this, I note in my testimony that I hope you will reflect on the "shoulds". I believe national assessment should be forward-thinking, should look ahead of us, should be about what I call the "right stuff" at the right level. It shouldn't be looking backwards. That is why we have State and local and teacher assessment. Give us a vision. Put that in front of us because you can leverage up our activities by quality national work.

I worry that the nature of it is very expensive, and what we will end up doing is replicating the existing assessment and not be of value added to 30-some States that have good assessment programs.

And as I state in the paper, I believe that the provision of a quality and rigorous national education report card, with innovative national achievement measures and appropriately rigorous national standards, can serve to enhance the performance of students across the Nation and within the individual States and districts.

Turning to my second question, I am here to say that since 1984, Connecticut has been about maximum outcome assessment—not minimum—trying to raise standards. As you read the testimony, I believe we can be a prototype to you. We, like the Nation, have no national curriculum or State curriculum. We had no statewide tests prior to this; no adoption of textbooks. So we could go for the gold; we could go for the higher expectation.

I hope national assessment will reflect that, and as you look at the Connecticut evidence—and in the packet, Attachment 1 is the *Wall Street Journal* article of April 24—where districts have come forward to say this macro-level activity—and Connecticut is a religion of localism—this test was very hard to do, but the sum total of it is that it has given clarity and direction to teaching and learning, and that is what the education business is about.

I also want you to know that in Connecticut, no one is declaring victory on our test because everyone has much room for growth. We have got to be careful we don't build assessments that some people can maximize out easily, because there are a lot of competencies that not enough of our Nation's children are sufficiently able in—but we don't measure those. We measure the easy stuff, and some districts, our high-wealth mainly, come out looking good.

My third question gets at—Can existing testing methods meet our assessment demands? Here, I just want to point out to you that this little document called "Connecticut Common Core of Learning" is what has propelled us. It doesn't take much. It is a vision of what the high school diploma should be; the integration of skills and knowledge, attitudes and attributes, applications and understanding.

This document is what we are about in Connecticut. We have decided as good as that mastery test is that the *Wall Street Journal* praised, it is not enough. It doesn't get the depth of understanding for all children. We need performance assessment measures, measures that take extended periods of time to really get at those qualities of interpreting, understanding, applying, transferring knowledge, so we in fact will be the premier Nation in the 21st century.

In doing this, I want to acknowledge the fact that we have in Hartford, Connecticut right now 120 teachers—some, Senator, from New Mexico I am pleased to say—from 20 urban districts, from the Coalition of Essential Schools, from Project Learning of the Education Commission. They are here in Connecticut to work with us to build these performance measures that are going to take some of them a week.

In attachment 9, pages 25-54, I give you examples of what some of these new assessments look like, but it is a week to train these people, to go back and see if this works.

I want to thank the National Science Foundation for giving us \$1 million because Connecticut did not have the resources, and if it wasn't for that grant that caught us at the right moment, we couldn't be building capacity with the Council of Chief State School Officers to move the Nation ahead, to be a partner with NAEP in this activity.

The fourth question that I raise is the Federal role. Here, I'd like to thank the Federal Government, Senator. If it wasn't for the knowledge base on teaching effectiveness that was invested in the Sixties and Seventies, my million-dollar investment recently could not have brought to fruition the quality standards—the knowledge base of Gaia Leinhardt, Lee Shulman and David Berliner—it was there when we needed it. Like you, we will make policy or tests with or without information because we are constrained to do that. This good information that the Federal Government invested in helped us leverage the quality.

Therefore I ask you don't turn off the spigot; keep educational research coming. I hope through your hearings you can get clarity on the Federal role. I would recommend R and D being one that States do poorly, but we could use in maximizing our investments.

We need confidence, though, that you are going to be there because if you aren't, we will invest, and that perhaps leads to this duplication of efforts that we see which is not in the national nor State interest.

My fifth question is—Are there national vehicles available? I am pleased to say I find three of them: The National Assessment of Educational Progress, the National Educational Longitudinal Survey, and the School and Staffing Survey. These national vehicles, we in Connecticut have built into our accountability system. They are efficient ways to get quality information.

Unfortunately, outside of NAEP, NELS has very few partners. So I do want you to know that I believe that the Federal Government is moving in the right direction. I'd like you to know that we are a supporter of NAEP, but as Gordon can comment, we are a very critical supporter. We see limitations in what they are doing. Their assessments are not visionary. Their resources are limited. And I worry—but the jury is still out, and we will be with them to make a better assessment—but I am worried that the quality of that is jeopardized by limited funding and too much breadth of coverage.

I would also ask you, Senator, to reconsider the prohibition against districts and schools participating in NAEP. These are national resources that constituents should be able to take advantage of. The way it is now, there is an artificial prohibition so New York City cannot participate in NAEP yet Connecticut can. They need that data.

I served on the Commission on Minimum Standards for New York City. We wanted an assessment in computer literacy, but New York couldn't do it. That is an artificial prohibition that I believe is not in the national interest. I believe the prohibition you should go for is on page 6 of my testimony—do not allow NAEP or NELS to be student assessments. Make States and locals build those census assessments. But above that level, let us participate; whether it is a school or a district or a State, we all have policy questions that we want answered, and you have a national resource.

Finally, the good news is in the sixth question. In your Hawkins-Stafford bill, you created the National Forum. Today I am presenting to my State colleagues the final report, which I have put in the record, which looks at the gap in existing Federal, State and local data collection. It is a start in where do we build better information.

I'd like to thank you for creating that provision in the Hawkins-Stafford Act, bringing States and the Federal Government together, and we hope with the council and other allies we'll be able to improve.

With that I conclude by saying I encourage greater Federal investment in collaboration with States and districts in building an intergovernmental capacity for monitoring and reporting regularly

and adequately on the true condition of education in the Nation and in the States.

Thank you.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Forgione (with attachments retained in the files of the subcommittee) follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. FORGIONE

I wish to thank you for the invitation to share my perspectives on the important education policy issue regarding "the Creation of a National Education Report Card." My comments this morning are based primarily upon the past decade of quality and challenging experiences that I have gained as the Director of the educational research and evaluation functions in the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). Connecticut has been recognized for its innovative and high quality student and teacher assessment and education policy research work. (See Attachments 1 through 6, pages A-1 to A-13, for recent articles describing Connecticut's introduction of high and rigorous standards and new performance strategies for evaluating students and teachers.) My comments also reflect my current role as chairperson of the National Education Statistical Agenda Committee (NESAC) of the National Forum on Education Statistics which over the past year has been exploring the current status of available national education information. This week in Washington, DC, I am presenting to the National Forum a set of statistical improvement recommendations that my committee of State and federal agency colleagues have prepared (see Attachment 12, pages A-71 thru A-87). Thus, my perspectives are those of a "reflective practitioner" who values information for its usefulness in improving the practices of schools and enhancing the achievement of our Nation's most valued resource, our children.

At the outset I wish to acknowledge that I do not have sufficient or recent information about appropriate federal mechanisms and apparatus to comment adequately about the second part of the proposal, namely: "To Establish a National Council on Educational Goals." However, I can offer insights into the types of criteria and processes that one should foster as part of such a strategy to bring forth a national consensus on quality outcomes for America's schools and to monitor the progress of education institutions in fulfilling their mission to ensure equity and excellence for all students.

I have organized my testimony to address specifically a series of questions related to the National Education Report Card and its implications for educational policy and practice at the national, State and local levels.

A. Is There A Need for A National Education Report Card?

I support in principal the intention of Senate Bill 2034 to create a National Education Report Card to measure the achievement of both students and schools. The National Education Report Card, like any education report card that we receive on our children's progress, will make statements to its clients about: (a) what is important and what do we value at a particular grade level; and (b) what are the standards or expectations that schools have established to determine how students are doing.

Connecticut's rich and quality assessment experiences over the past decade have clearly pointed out that tests and standards by themselves do not guarantee positive student outcomes. The challenge is to design and develop tests that reflect both appropriate content and acceptable standards. While it is possible both to take easy tests and to set high standards, or to take hard test and to set easy standards, neither approach is acceptable. We should not be building tests either to measure "inadequate curriculum" or to assess "unacceptable performance levels." Thus, with regard to the national report card, it is especially important that our focus should not just be about producing statistics that monitor changes in student academic performance or growth over time, but should also be about ensuring that our tests are indicators of worthwhile performance.

For a test to have a positive and catalytic impact on teaching, instruction and curriculum, the tests must assess "which we value" based on "what we know." National and State tests need to focus on "the should's." There are two key dimensions of a quality assessment development process: First, what should a student be able to know and do at a particular level of schooling? (i.e., "the right stuff"), and second, given a range of possible student performance, what level of accomplishment should students be able to achieve on that measure (i.e., "the right level"). For example,

when students graduate from high school what constitutes an acceptable level of knowledge, skills and dispositions to ensure that our students will be productive members of society?

Tests send important signals to educators and to our public about what's important; they do influence the behavior of both teachers and students. Therefore, the quality and content of these measures will have profound effects on schools. I believe that the provision of a quality and rigorous National Education Report Card (with innovative national achievement measures and appropriately rigorous national standards) can serve to enhance the performance of students across the Nation and within individual States and districts.

B. Do We Have Evidence That Quality Large-Scale Tests Can Produce Positive Outcomes?

In many ways Connecticut's assessment development track record over the past decade lends credence and optimism that quality and rigorous tests can bear positive benefits for schools (see Attachment 7, pages A-14 thru A-18, which provides an overview of the evolution of Connecticut's assessment strategies and programs from the mid-1970's through the early 1980's). Like the current national assessment context, in 1984 Connecticut began its development process working within a policy environment with a strong tradition of local control of public education, no statewide curriculum and no statewide text books. In launching its statewide mastery test development process Connecticut had to build consensus among educators and the public on maximum outcomes for students and had to come to agreement on appropriately high levels of performance for Connecticut students at each benchmark assessment point (i.e., what and how much student learning should be achieved through the end of Grade 3, which would then be tested in the Fall on the Grade 4 Mastery Test; through the end of Grade 5, to be tested on the Grade 6 test; through the end of Grade 7, to be tested on the Grade 8 test; and starting in 1993, through the end of Grade 9, to be tested on the Grade 10 test).

Today, Connecticut maintains its respect for local control of public education. There still is no State curriculum nor statewide text books. However, through the mastery test development process and through implementation of this testing program, Connecticut schools have gained clarity and direction on what the important academic outcomes of public schooling should be at key instructional benchmarks. It is still the local responsibility to organize and deliver education using methods it deems appropriate. (See Attachment 1, pages A-1 and A-2, *Wall Street Journal* article on the impact of the Connecticut Mastery Test Program on districts.)

Thus, quality and challenging tests can have a positive impact on raising the expectations of educators about what students should know and be able to do. By the way, the Mastery Test results have shown positive incremental gains over the four year (1986-1989). The initial levels of student performance demonstrated that all districts had room for much improvement; the results also confirmed a large gap in academic performance between high wealth and low wealth districts, as well as between non-poor and poor youngsters (all of whom do not reside in low wealth districts). The Connecticut State Board of Education has aggressively taken on the challenging task of ensuring equity and excellent for all students in Connecticut—that is, high levels of student performance on rigorous and challenging content.

As expressed in the position paper on "Accountability for Worthwhile Student Outcomes" (see Attachment 11, pages A-68 thru A-71), policy makers need to be careful in designing their assessment initiatives. Our Connecticut experiences have shown that maximum-oriented assessments can not be produced if the tests are required to be used as a "graduation test" requirement.

C. Can Existing Testing Methods Meet Our Assessment Demands?

The Connecticut Mastery Test experience led the State Board of Education to adopt a new framework for student outcomes and expectations. In January 1987, based on the in depth deliberations by a distinguished state task force, Commissioner Tirozzi endorsed the Connecticut Common Core of Learning (CCL). This blueprint defined the outcomes expected of a Connecticut high school graduate who will be a productive member of society (see Attachment 8, pages A-13 thru A-24, for a description of the Common Core of Learning outcomes framework).

The CCL blueprint clearly required that it would be necessary to go beyond current paper and pencil testing methods. Traditional tests have an appropriate place in testing certain kinds of skills, such as can students read competently? Or can they compute? However, as demonstrated by Connecticut's use of writing samples (at Grades 4, 6 and 8), alternative assessment strategies need to be developed to move teaching and instruction toward those valued outcomes of education currently being exposed in the popular literature, in business journals, and also by our educational experts. Here I speak specifically of a student's capability to think, to prob-

lem-solve, to communicate and to work collaboratively. For example, the attainment of higher order student competence, such as whether our students can offer multiple interpretations of important historical events, or whether they can frame and solve complicated mathematics problems and then transfer their knowledge to other applications, will require more open-ended, extended and performance-oriented assessment approaches. If we do not modify our testing practices to incorporate such approaches, we will either leave important domains of instruction untested, or we will deceive ourselves through inadequate test measures (e.g., paper and pencil tests).

Well-constructed and in depth assessment strategies at the national and State levels can ensure that curricula are not just dumping grounds of facts and statistics to be memorized, but that students can demonstrate depth of understanding and higher levels of performance. States and localities need national leadership, both intellectual and fiscal, to enhance the design and development of new assessment methods (especially performance tasks).

Connecticut has launched, with the cosponsorship of the National Science Foundation, a performance assessment program in high school science and mathematics that incorporates extended and in depth performance assessment tasks. Over the past eighteen months, Connecticut has been and is presently collaborating with a dozen colleague States, the Coalition of Essential Schools, the Project Relearning, and the Urban District Leadership Consortium, which represents the twenty largest school districts in the nation. Attachment 9, pages 1-25 through A-54, provides an overview of this innovative assessment development work. Again, Connecticut's prototype work provides encouragement that we can design alternative assessment approaches that will address the full range of student outcomes and will require all students to become masters of essential content at higher levels of performance. Attachments 2-6, pages A-3 thru A-13, describe the novel nature of Connecticut's innovative approaches and the initial positive reaction of distinguished teachers to these new assessment methods.

D. Does the Federal Government Have a Particular Role to Play in Education Reform?

An era of education renewal was launched in the early 1980's when the Secretary of Education warned that America was a nation-at-risk due to the unacceptable levels of student academic performance. This decade closed with the dramatic convening of a national summit on education by President Bush and our Governors and the establishment of national education goals for education. But how are we to know if we are achieving our goals and doing a better job of addressing the educational needs of our students? Concomitant federal and State leadership in creating and maintaining a national education statistical and informational infrastructure is needed to fill out the blueprint of education reform.

There are two essential areas related to the educational research and statistical for which I believe the Federal Government should take primary responsibility, namely: (I.) The investment in creating the educational research knowledge base on effective teaching and student learning and related education policy issues; and (II.) the investment in building an adequate statistical and information infrastructural from the schoolhouse, through the district and State agencies, to the national level.

With regard to the first area, education research, it is with much pleasure that I am able to report the essential and integral involvement and use that Connecticut has made of the research knowledge base, particularly related to subject knowledge and assessment methods, that was produced through the Federal Government's investment in the education R & D in the 1970's.

Integral to the success of "national and State report cards" is the timely availability of a mature and well-developed research knowledge base to undergird national and State assessment development work. Connecticut's recent experiences in designing performance assessments of both beginning teacher and high school students in science and mathematics have been centrally dependent on the availability of educational research. For example, the knowledge base from the educational research on teaching—largely funded through the federal education centers in the 1970's and produced by Gaia Leinhardt (University of Pittsburgh), Lee Shulman (Stanford University) and David Berliner (Arizona State University)—provided Connecticut the needed foundation and understandings about effective teaching practices on which to build our more demanding and high quality assessments. Clearly, the federal investment in education R & D has been an asset and an indispensable element in the success of Connecticut's innovative work. The availability of such quality research needs to be more certain so that State and national assessment work will be of the highest quality and effectiveness.

The second area, that I believe a major and concerted federal investment is needed, relates to the collection and reporting of educational statistics and informa-

tion. The institution of a more adequate report card (vs. the currently inadequate Wall Chart and uneven federal condition of education reports) will require major enhancements in the intergovernmental data collection and reporting capacities. (In Section F I will discuss the emergence of a valuable capacity that can aid in this work, namely the National Forum on Educational Statistics.)

E. Are National Vehicles Available to Aid States and Districts In Monitoring Education Reforms?

Presently, three programs in NCES have the potential to be valuable "national resources" to examine important educational outcomes and related measures and to avoid potentially burdensome special data collections. Connecticut presently has designed its accountability systems to incorporate the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the National Educational Longitudinal Survey (NELS) and the School and Staffing Survey (SSS) programs. We feel these national cooperative information bases will be valuable resources to Connecticut policy makers to place our performance in context. Their efficient sampling approaches allow for a State representative sample with a minimum of extra burden. However, I do wish to indicate that in the case of NAEP, the quality of the assessment will be a serious determinant of its utility to Connecticut. NAEP must focus on the "shoulds" and must push the horizons so that it enhances and not duplicates State assessment systems that are in place. I also ask that the prohibition against district and school data collection and reporting be reconsidered. Large districts deserve to have equal access, as do States, to NAEP assessments.

I would advocate that participation by schools for the collection and reporting of valid and representative NAEP data should be compulsory and at the discretion of the appropriate decisionmaking body (i.e., the President and Congress for the national level statistics; The Governors and State boards for the State level statistics; and the Mayors and local boards for local level statistics). The sole prohibition that I would recommend in the use of NAEP data is that NAEP, and NELS for that matter, should not be permitted to report individual level information (i.e., NAEP should not attempt to replace or duplicate State or local census testing programs). This, these programs of NCES have the potential to be "national resources" by addressing important educational policy questions at the national, State and local levels. Adequate funding and clarity of vision and purpose is needed to achieve their potential value.

It should also be recognized that current report cards are predominantly focused on outcome measures of education. I do encourage a parallel federal investment in educational R&D work to fill out the blueprint of crucial school process/instructional variables. These are the cluster of educationally amenable factors that education policy makers and administrators can alter, eg., school environment, course content, course of studies, teacher qualities, school expectations. (See Attachment 10, pages A-55 thru A-67, particularly, A-66).

F. What Mechanisms Are Available to Address Education's Information Capacity Building Needs?

The National Forum on Educational Statistics was created in 1989 to help meet the need for designing, developing and maintaining a national education statistical and information infrastructure. An outgrowth of the National Cooperative Education Statistics System provided under Public Law 100-297, the National Forum is an organization of State and federal agencies and national education associations responsible for collecting, reporting and using national educational information. Their mission is to collaboratively pursue improvements to our education data system.

Over the past year, representatives of the National Forum through the National Education Statistics Agenda Committee (NESAC), have worked hard and productively to examine the current status of available national education information and to make a set of thoughtful statistical improvement recommendations.

This first report of the National forum on Educational Statistics is intended to provide broad direction regarding the types of educational information that federal and State agencies should cooperatively be focusing on over the next decade. The credo for this consensus document is, "Good data help to make good policies." The ultimate objective is to put in place an education information base that will provide adequate, timely, useful, accurate, and comparable data to educational policymakers at all levels.

Attachment 12 (pages A-71 thru A-87) provides an overview of the structure and content of the recently completed national agenda report, entitled "Improving Our National Education Data System: An Agenda for Action." This report makes thirty-five (35) specific data improvement recommendations in four domains, i.e., student and family background statistics (six recommendations), education resource statis-

tics (twelve recommendations), school process statistics (six recommendations) and education outcome statistics (eleven recommendations).

It is intended that this report will stimulate federal and State actions to address and improve the current limitations in our intergovernmental education information systems and serve as a catalyst for enhancing the accountability of the nation's elementary and secondary educational institutions.

I encourage a greater federal investment and collaboration with States and districts in building an intergovernmental capacity for the monitoring and reporting, regularly and adequately, on the true condition of education in the Nation and across the States. The creation of a National Educational Report Card can be a vehicle to serve the best interests of the nation, all of our children and the institutions of education.

List of Attachments

No	Publications	Pages
1.	Wall Street Journal, Tuesday, April 24, 1990, pg. 1 and 6: "Report Cards: Connecticut Grades Its Schools and Holds Officials Responsible"	A1-A2
2.	The Hartford Courant, April 2, 1990, page 1 ff. "New Methods are put to the test on State's education reform"	A3-A4
3.	The New York Times, January 31, 1990, page 1 ff. "But is the Child Learning? Schools Trying New Tests"	A5-A6
4.	Newsweek, January 8, 1990, pp. 56-58, (especially the boxed item on page 58) "Much More Than Filling in the Blanks"	A7-A9
5.	Teacher Magazine, November 1989, Issue 2, pp. 14-15 "Testing A New Kind of Test"	A10-A11
6.	Education Week, September 13, 1989, pp. 1, 21 and 22 (Volume IX, Number 1): "In Connecticut, Moving Past Pencil and Paper: Teachers Evaluated on Class Behavior, and Student Assessment Rates Performance"	A12-A13
7.	Education Measurement: Issues and Practice, Summer 1985, pp. 12-16, "How Testing is Changing Education in Connecticut"	A14-A18
8.	Connecticut's Common Core of Learning, Adopted by Connecticut State Board of Education on January 7, 1987, in Challenge for Excellence: Connecticut's Comprehensive Plan for Elementary, Secondary, Vocational, Career and Adult Education: A Policy Plan 1991-95	A19-A24
9.	Sample Materials from the Connecticut Common Core of Learning Performance Assessment Project, Co-Sponsored by National Science Foundation and Connecticut State Department of Education, July 1990	A25-A54
10.	Journal of American Statistical Association, 1989, "Can Reporting on Educational Indicators Serve as a Catalyst for the Improvement of Educational Achievement? A Visionary Exploration" (See also, but not included there: National Center for Educational Statistics, "Collecting and Profiling School/Instructional Variables as Part of the State-NAEP Results Reporting: Some Technical and Policy Issues," by Pascal D. Forgione, J. Baron, and E. Haertel (Editor and Chair), Report of the NAEP Technical Review Panel on the 1986 Reading Anomaly, January 1989, pp. 171-212.)	A55-A67
11.	Connecticut State Department of Education, "Preliminary Draft—Accountability for Worthwhile Student Outcomes," May 7, 1990, by Pascal D. Forgione, three pages	A68-A70
12.	National Forum on Education Statistics, July, 1990: Improving Our National Education Data System: An Agenda for Action, A Report by the National Education Statistics Agenda Committee, Edited by Pascal D. Forgione, Jr. and Martin Orland	A71-A87

Senator BINGAMAN. Our final witness today is Mr. Gordon Ambach, who is executive director of the Council of the Chief State School Officers, here in Washington. He served for 10 years previous to this as the New York State Commissioner of Education. He also served as president of the University of the State of New York.

Mr. Ambach's career is centered around issues of education policymaking and developing legislation for education, with a special interest in the relationship, authority in and responsibility for policymaking between local, State and Federal levels of government.

In addition, Mr. Ambach serves as chair of the Advisory Committee for the Research and Development Center at UCLA and is a member of the newly-formed board under the National Academy of Sciences concerned with international comparisons of education.

Mr. Ambach was kind enough to testify when we had the hearings in the Governmental Affairs Committee last fall, and we appreciate you being willing and able to testify again today.

**STATEMENT OF GORDON AMBACH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS, WASHINGTON, DC**

Mr. AMBACH. Good morning, Senator Bingaman, members of the staff, ladies and gentlemen.

I appreciate very much having another opportunity to join you and your colleagues in testifying on this extremely important set of issues about assessment, about education indicators, and about the mechanisms that we should have at the Federal level in order to assure there is an adequate and an appropriate monitoring of national goals.

May I say, Senator, how much we applaud your own initiative here. It was before your time on the Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities that you began initiating these discussions through the Subcommittee on Government Information and Regulation, and we very much appreciate your carrying this interest now into this subcommittee.

As my colleagues have already said, the issues of information about progress of education in the United States are absolutely critical.

I'd like to make four points this morning, and with your permission, of course, I'd like to have my testimony submitted completely for the record. But let me summarize these four.

First, I'd like to speak specifically to the bill, which proposes that there be a national report card council, and then I would like to make three other comments which have to do with the issue of resources in order to provide the substance that would be on the report card. It will do our country little good to have a report card if it is blank, or a report card that in fact has information like the current wall chart does, simply because it is available, and yet which is not really helpful by way of policy direction for education in this country.

Second, some comments about this issue of governmental organization—what kind of mechanism should there be at the national level.

On pages 2 and 3 of my testimony I have made six points about the nature of a panel or monitoring mechanism. First, there should be—there needs to be—a panel which can monitor progress on national goals for education. That does not necessarily mean it needs to be legislated.

Second, this panel should be established by agreement of the Congress, the President and the National Governors Association, with advice of State and local education representatives.

The formation of any panel at this point must be seen in the context of what has been happening by way of national goals. And of course I would remind everybody that those national goals came by an agreement by the NGA and the President; they did not come from a council or any particular machinery of government. That was by a mutual agreement. Panels or other mechanisms to moni-

tor—and independent ones, I might note—can also be established by agreement.

Whatever the means may be, it is critical to look at functions. In my view, the panel's functions should be limited to monitoring progress on national goals for education and making recommendations on the assessments and information systems needed to satisfactorily monitor progress. The panel should not have responsibility to recommend new national goals nor revise existing goals; should not advocate State adoption of national goals nor advocate strategies to achieve national goals. These functions are the responsibilities of the Congress, the President or the Governors and education authorities in the several States. I will come back to this point in just a moment because I believe it is essential.

Panel operations should not duplicate the responsibilities of the Secretary of Education for reporting on the progress of education in the United States.

Third is the call for a very substantial increase in Federal funding for education statistics and national assessment. I realize that a plea for funds in difficult budget times is not especially welcome. If there is one place, however, where a longstanding case can be made for Federal activity in education, it is in education statistics. The United States Office of Education was established in 1867 for the purpose of having the commissioner make annual reports on the progress of education. We must be very careful in looking at what the Secretary's responsibilities are, those of NECES, the national center, and those of the NAGB board, in crafting a specific entity now which would monitor goals.

Finally, the panel should complete its work by the year 2001; that is to say, a sunset arrangement so that we are looking at a specific period of a decade we probably will have needed to create something different within that time.

If I could, Senator, come back to one key point about the question of functions. I stress monitoring. I disagree with my colleague from Rutgers and Eagleton with respect to mixing that function of monitoring together with the function of making recommendations on goals or making recommendations on strategy for implementation tasks, other than recommending the assessment instruments that you need in order to monitor.

The reason for making that distinction is that if in fact we are to create a panel whose responsibility is to independently and objectively monitor the progress of goals and strategies that have been set by someone else, you do not also give that panel the task of recommending strategies and goals because then what happens subsequent to that time is that they are monitoring the results of their own recommendations, or they may have the bias that they have been involved in the process of attempting to change the goals, then assess and monitor what is done with those revised goals.

We can't have it both ways. We either have to have a monitoring mechanism—and that is primarily, I believe, what you have constructed in the report card bill—or you have to have something which is an entity that would be charged with the responsibility of establishing goals, revising goals and setting implementation strategies.

In my judgment, the latter is the function of the President, of the Congress and of Governors or State legislators and State education authorities.

Now, if I could turn to three other points quite quickly, and these all have to do with the question of what is the substance of a report card. I will say as I lead into these three points that we very strongly as an organization and personally have very strongly supported the development of national goals for education. Our organization, going back to 1984, strongly supported the expansion of NAEP and indeed was the first organization which really strongly supported State-by-State NAEP.

We also supported, as Pat has indicated, the authority for a local school district and the availability of a school district to participate in NAEP if it wished to, but not a requirement that any locals must. The system should be primarily State-by-State.

At any rate, against that backdrop three key points by way of the substance of what goes in a report card. The first one has to do with the fact that with a \$200 billion plus enterprise in elementary and secondary education, it is clear that we are operating our assessment and indicator systems on a starvation diet. There has never been sufficient money at the Federal level to be able to adequately monitor the indicators and the assessments of education. And I have provided as a balance item here an indication of what we do in this country with respect to health, agriculture and labor.

In statistics alone in health, last year in fiscal 1990, it was \$300 million; agriculture, \$240 million; labor statistics, \$225 million; in the same fiscal year for education, between NAEP and the statistics alone, \$40 million. That simply is not anywhere near the right proportion.

We have long ago advocated nearly a sixfold increase in this budget. I know it is an extremely tight budget year. One has to look at the expansion of our capacity in terms of a ten-year plan, in terms of building out over the course of this decade.

The next point has to do with the issue of how one designs the assessment and indicator system. Here, it is critical that in the design we look at the multiple relationships among Federal, State and local levels, and that in crafting assessments or indicator systems, we are certain to provide there are mechanisms for all three levels to participate in the development.

I would use just two examples of the way this can be done. In the development of goals and objectives, the consensus that falls or needs to be behind any NAEP exam. Our council organized that consensus process with local and State and Federal representation to do the mathematics NAEP, and we have just finished doing that for the reading NAEP.

Those are two examples of the way that this can be done. These processes must be backstopped by way of Federal support which goes to the process of helping to set the goals and objectives and which also is needed in the very critical process now underway which is setting achievement levels for these different NAEP exams.

The final point that I would make come back again to NAEP, and that is a very strong plea that there be a substantial expansion of resources for NAEP. I realize we are not here in an appropriate

tions committee; we are not here talking specifically about the appropriations issue. But I know, Senator, that for you and your colleagues, any major move in this area of developing information and assessments has to be hinged eventually to the issue of providing resources to do it.

NAEP has been inching up, if you will, in terms of its resource, but we are now right on the threshold. The 1990 NAEP State-by-State for the first time only is assessing mathematics at the eighth grade level. In order to be able to move State-by-State assessment at three different grade levels, to move in 1994 for an expansion of NAEP at the State-by-State level will require a significant increase in resource to do it.

If we do not, what will happen is a continuation of the wall chart; a wall chart which is created—and I am not criticizing the Secretary or his predecessor in the Department of Education—the wall chart has been created out of the only thing that has existed. So they strung together on the wall chart information about SATs and ACTs, which are not the measures of educational progress in this country. They strung together information about retention rates of students between ninth and twelfth grade, do not even include anybody who gets a G.E.D. diploma in terms of those figures, and the wall chart never agrees with what is in the census about the net numbers and proportions of youth who in fact have diplomas.

Finally, the wall chart uses one more indicator, and that is the percentage of students in the schools and the States who happen to take AP or advanced placement exams. That is hardly a national report card for education.

And unless we are going to make the commitment of building the assessment indicators and building the other kinds of indicators of course taking, of what in fact is happening in process in the school system, then we will not have an adequate means to measure progress toward the goals in this decade, we will not have all of the substance which would be necessary for an effective report card for the Nation.

Senator Bingaman, thank you very kindly for allowing me to join you once again; we welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ambach follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. AMBACH

Senators Pell and Bingaman and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on the proposed National Education Report Card Act, federal action to assess national education goals, and the need to strengthen information about education in the United States. I applaud Senator Bingaman's initiative in addressing those issues, first through the Subcommittee on Government Information and Regulations and now through the bill and the work of this Subcommittee.

There is a critical need for increased federal commitment to developing the systems of information about education in our nation. The need is heightened because of initiatives for national goals, but the need is not new. The system for assessing education and collecting nationwide information about education has long been on a starvation list. The importance of information about student performance, teacher quality, and school indicators is now coming dramatically to the surface. Your hearings can help to focus national attention on the needs.

Throughout the United States the interest in national education goals and nationwide education reporting has undergone a sea-change within the past decade. National goals require objectives measured by student performance. The concept of a

report card depends on information about how the system works, the quality of its teachers, the characteristics of the curriculum, facilities and finances—not only on a national basis, but also on a State-by-State basis. The appetite for this information far exceeds the current capacity to deliver such information. To provide the information requires a substantial strengthening of the Federal Government's support for education information and assessment.

I have four major points this morning. First I have comments about the proposed process for preparing a report card. May I address the key elements of what our nation needs? I will follow these comments with the key issues of resources to build assessment and information systems; without the latter, any report card will be blank.

1. A national panel needs to be established to monitor progress on national goals for education.

2. The panel should be established by agreement of the Congress, President, and National Governors' Association with advice of State and local education representatives.

3. The panel's functions should be limited to monitoring progress on national goals for education and making recommendations on the assessments and information systems needed to satisfactorily monitor progress.

4. The panel should not have responsibility to recommend new national goals or revise existing goals, to advocate State adoption of national goals, nor to advocate strategies to achieve national goals. These functions are the responsibilities of the Congress, the President, the governors, and education authorities.

5. Panel operations should not duplicate the responsibilities of the Secretary of Education for reporting on the progress of education in the United States.

6. The panel should complete its work by the Year 2001.

Second is the call for a very substantial increase in federal funding for education statistics and national assessment. I realize that a plea for funds in difficult budget times is not especially welcome. If there is one place, however, where a long-standing case can be made for federal activity in education, it is in education statistics. The United States Office of Education was established in 1867 to enable the United States Commissioner of Education to prepare annual reports on the status of education in the United States. The responsibility has continued to this day.

The Department of Education budget for FY90 includes about \$40 million for statistics (\$25) and National Assessment of Education Progress (\$15). The increase over FY89 was welcome, but the numbers for education information must be put in perspective. That federal commitment of \$40 million is for information about the assessment of a system in which there are nationwide expenditures—local, State, and federal—of about \$200 billion this year. The appropriations for education information in FY89 were \$36 million. In contrast, the appropriation for health statistics was more than \$300 million, for agricultural statistics more than \$240 million, and for labor statistics about \$225 million.

The Council of Chief State School Officers, in 1984, led the way to push for an increase in the federal budget for education statistics and for the expansion of national assessment for education. We argued then for a United States Department of Education budget for these purposes with a six-fold increase to enable a certain comparability with information about other service areas such as health, agriculture, and labor.

In order for the United States to have an adequate education information base of both indicators and student performance results, it will still require increases of that magnitude. The Federal Government must have substantial trend information for nationwide statistics, accompanied by an expansion in the capacity for State-by-State statistics, and a capacity to provide better comparisons with other nations on their education systems and the results.

The United States Department of Education has the basic structure to enable a more effective system for collecting and using education information. The developments of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the cooperative statistics programs with the state education agencies are sound. The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), which has been developing over the past 20 years, is a sound system for assessing student achievement. Both desperately need support.

The third point is the necessity for a strong continuing process which cuts across governmental levels—federal, State, and local—to guide development of assessments and collection of education information. Our nation has a decentralized education system. The calls for national goals and a nationwide report card have stressed the desirability of maintaining State and local options for setting State and local goals and objectives together with nationwide goals. A strong commitment continues to be

placed on the operation of our elementary and secondary schools as the responsibility of State and local education systems.

For many, many years there has been a significant fear of central information about education objectives and results. When NAEP was established in the 1960s, it was purposely designed so there was no comparison of the student results from one State to another. Only nationwide and regional results could be displayed. American attitudes on this issue have significantly changed. Our Council led the way in 1984 to advocate availability of national assessment on a State-by-State basis. Some States began as early as 1984 to use sampling of NAEP assessment in order to be able to relate their State student performance with the nation's. Now the challenge is to integrate national assessment with State and local assessment.

In a decentralized system it is essential that the interests at the school, school district, State, and federal levels are joined to construct assessment and information systems. We have demonstrated that this can be done to prepare for NAEP in mathematics in the spring of 1990. Our Council handled the task under contract from the United States Department of Education to develop a consensus on the objectives for that mathematics exam. We have done the same thing to set objectives for examinations in reading comprehension in 1992. The careful development of consensus at the three levels of governance is important—first, for credibility and acceptability of the results (does the assessment reliably reflect the level of knowledge and understanding of a subject?) and, second, because it is essential to streamline various assessments which occur at the school, school district, State, and national levels.

Unless multi-level assessment is advanced, there will be a considerable resistance at expanding the NAEP program. States and localities do not want to abandon current testing programs because they will lose trend data. They want to be able to combine their assessment programs with NAEP and their programs at collecting local and State information with the federal system for information. To assure expansion of nationwide information and assessment, a carefully developed consensus must exist across levels of government. To accomplish this requires a commitment of resources from the federal level to the process of consensus building and of extremely careful work in setting levels of achievement in scoring and reporting the tests.

Fourth, there are many ways in which national education information must be strengthened, including more consistent and comparable statistics about school characteristics, teacher quality, and the curriculum. But the most important investment to be made at this time at the federal level is expansion of NAEP. The tests of mathematics in 1990 through which we will have the first, extensive, State-by-State results are only for students at the eight-grade level. Expansion of testing to different age or grade levels and expansion of the subjects in which there will be examinations will cost money, as will further research and development on testing techniques for NAEP.

If we are serious about national goals and a national report card, it is essential to make the substantial investment necessary to assure we are measuring the right things.

During the past several years we have had an annual, national ritual with the release of the Department of Education's "Wall Chart." It is a prime example of the results of a long-term, starvation budget for education statistics and assessment. The Wall Chart displays information nationwide and State-by-State. It was not created as a report card on national goals or objectives, but rather as a display card of the only three "outcomes" the Department could find available on a State-by-State basis: One is average SAT or ACT scores; the second is the percentage of students retained from grades nine through twelve; the third is the percentage of students who take advanced placement exams. No one is satisfied that those three indicators are a satisfactory measure of results of American education. They are used year after year solely because they are the only measures available.

A significant result of your deliberations and the work of the President and governors should be immediate replacement of the Wall Chart with a design for a legitimate, nationwide report card related to agreed-upon national education goals. A commitment to provide the federal resources to build an effective national education information system which informs policy decisions at local, State, and national levels should also be reached. Your support for those objectives is extremely important.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Bingaman, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you once again for this opportunity. I would be pleased to respond to questions.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you very much.

Let me go back to the issue of what such a council or panel would actually do. I guess from the testimony I have heard, everybody agrees that they should monitor progress toward goals; no disagreement on that.

Sort of a second step—and maybe this is being done somewhere else, and these folks would not have to worry about it—is how you translate goals into measurable criteria. The goals that the President announced in the State of the Union Address and that the Governors endorsed to my knowledge so far have not been translated into measurable criteria that someone could look at—saying that we want to be first in the world in math/science by the year 2000 doesn't really give you too much to grab onto as far as assessing progress.

Let me just get any of the panel members to give me your views as to whether it would be appropriate for a panel like this to do that job of trying to translate general goals into measurable criteria—or is someone else going to do that? Is that being done elsewhere?

Yes, Ms. Fuhrman.

Ms. FUHRMAN. I think it is very important that this panel do it. I think you are right, we have very general goals, and just selecting specific objectives and targets is a political endeavor.—It is not simply a monitoring activity to decide that you are going to measure school readiness by decreasing number of low birth weight babies or increasing preschool attendance or improving health statistics for young children. Picking those measures is a serious, intense decision. It is not just a measurement decision devoid of value judgments, and I think we are naive if we think that we can assign a panel just picking measures without assuming that they are making important policy decisions in picking those measures.

I like the language of the bill that calls for extensive public input on critiquing the goals—public hearings on what do these goals mean; what are the kinds of strategies; what are the time lines we'd like to see; if low birth weight babies is an indicator that we want to use, by how much will we have to increase the incidence of low birth weight babies, within what time period until we get to the year 2000, so that kids would be ready for school?

I think those kinds of issues the panel must deal with, and it could not escape.

Mr. Ambach.

Mr. AMBACH. Two comments, Senator, about this type of function. First, as a matter of what has happened up to this point. When the Governors released their statement in February, it included not only the six goals but it included, if I remember correct, about 25 objectives scattered among the six goals. That was at least a first cut at the sense of objectives.

You are absolutely right that those goals have to be translated to specific and measurable objectives, and then there must be assessment means designed in order to measure those objectives. But at least there was a first cut that was made by the NGA.

In my judgment, it is imperative that the President and the NGA, with advisors of various sorts and, I believe, also with Congressional participation, needs to refine those statements of objectives.

I do not hold the view that the refining of those statements of objectives is something one passes off to a council or a panel. I take a very strong view that what has happened in the course of this past year with the President and the Governors' commitment to the goals is an extremely bold action that they have taken of commitment to what these goals should be and what these objectives should be.

In my view it is absolutely critical that they are held to task on the issue of pushing on their establishment of objectives and their establishment of the overall parameters of what it is that we are meant to be accomplishing, that this does not get passed off to someone else.

Now, there is an interplay between establishing objectives and establishing assessments because very often the objective gets shaped by what is it that you can actually measure. So I can see an interplay.

But the first point I am making is that there needs to be a very precise limitation on a panel or council that its function is to monitor and to assess and not to create the objectives as well as it does not create the goals.

The other point that I would make that I think is very instructive on this is what has happened with respect to NAEP and the NAGB board. In the national goals there is an implication that NAEP will be used—in fact, there is a very explicit statement to that effect. The third goal has to do with achievement in five subject areas at grades four, eight, and 12, and that was all laid out in large part because that is what NAEP is designed to do.

The question becomes one of who actually sets the achievement levels on NAEP which are the national goal targets. You can do that in one of two ways. You can either set achievement levels by saying performance at such-and-such a point on the mathematics exam is the national target, but then you can do it another way. You can say yes, that is the national target, but for what portion of the children in this country—for 100 percent of them, for 75 percent, for 25 percent.

The way this one has been in effect resolved is that the NAGB board has the responsibility to set achievement levels on the different NAEP exams, which means—let's take mathematics at the eighth grade level—they will have three cut points for the math exam in eighth grade, and they will be classified that this is a level of advanced work, this is a level of proficient work, this is a level of basic work, or some other criterion. That tells you how well anyone does on the particular exam. That is not a goal. That tells you what the test measures. The goal in effect would be what portion of our children should be performing at the advanced level, what proportion should be performing at the proficient, and what proportion at the basic.

The design that has been developed for NAGB in effect places with the Governors and the President, and if the Congress were involved, the responsibility of saying this is the proportion of children who should be reaching this level of achievement. But the NAGB board does not set that. They set the level of achievement.

I hope I am making the distinction clear.

Senator BINGAMAN. Let me just pursue that a minute.

The concern I have is in order for this to be meaningful, as you have indicated in your testimony, this has to be at least a ten-year project, and you have to presumably put in place some goals and some objectives and some criteria that you are measuring against and maintain those over that period of time. You can't change them every 2 years when there is an election.

I am concerned that if not just the establishment of the broad goals, but the actual establishment of the lesser criteria for measuring progress toward goals, that that is also to be done by elected political officials—myself, others in the Congress, people in the Governors' offices, most of whom are running this year.

Is there a real danger that we will get a level of turbulence in this process which will eliminate our ability to have a meaningful assessment? I don't know what your thoughts are on that.

Mr. AMBACH. Well, you are addressing a very, very important point, and I am not advocating that one would construct the panel solely of persons who were elected Governors or solely of persons who were designated by the President as key administrative officials—or indeed, if the Congress had a set of representatives on the panel, that they would need to be members of the Congress. So that you can have on any panel a mix between those who are in the responsibilities themselves and who are experts in the area.

There are also very, very effective ways to form expert panels on specific indicators or specific measures or assessments, which then—

Senator BINGAMAN. So you are saying that the panel that is called for here in this legislation, this council, should include in it people who are directly part of the political process, but it should not be dominated by them; is that what I am understanding?

Mr. AMBACH. I believe it should be a mix, that's correct, Senator.

Senator BINGAMAN. A mix. But given that, if it were a mix of both some professionals who were not political officeholders and some who were political officeholders, then you think that it would be appropriate for this council to do that setting of criteria, taking the overall goals and saying becoming first in math and science means we want to see our kids do the following when they are tested in eighth grade math by such-and-such a time?

Mr. AMBACH. No. That is a very good question to make a distinction as to what function would be performed. Now you have constructed a panel or a council which in fact is establishing the goals, and that, I am not advocating.

I need to make one more point by way of context, Senator, which I think is very important in trying to deal with this issue right now.

The setting of "national goals", as I pointed out earlier, was done by agreement between the Governors and the President. Now, just last Friday in the House of Representatives was enacted H.R. 5115, which in fact is the first formal action by one body of the Congress that incorporated the six goals, added two others, and stated certain policy or directions that might accompany the implementation of those goals.

I do not know what will happen by way of counterpart actions over here in the Senate, but the point I am getting at is that one has to connect up any consideration of a panel for monitoring or

assessing with what action is likely to occur in the Senate and what conferencing will occur with respect to H.R. 5115.

Let's assume that there was an agreement between the two Houses, that the President's initiatives, which have already been passed in the Senate, that S. 1676, which focuses on teacher education, which has already, I believe, moved through the committee and which focuses on professional development, is a counterpart to large portions of the House bill. Let's assume that there is a combination of pieces on the Senate that becomes conferenceable, if you will, on H.R. 5115.

The question then will be do you build in any kind of mechanism at that point for purposes of monitoring, or don't you.

I still would argue that for purposes of this kind of a panel over the ten-year period, whether it is a mix of public officials, elected officials and experts or not, still should have a function which is essentially limited to monitoring and assessing and not to establishing goals or even establishing objectives. I think that is properly what the Congress, the President, the Governors and others should be doing, and you leave this mechanism as a monitoring mechanism.

Senator BINGAMAN. Let me just ask any of you this. I think I understand the distinction that everyone is making here. The concern I have is say you get to 1995, and you have put in place a system for monitoring student performance in eighth grade math that is generally agreed upon, and everybody knows where it is. Who will have said how much eighth grade math the average student should know in order to be able to achieve some of these goals that the President has identified? He says we should be first in the world in eighth grade math by the year 2000. Who is going to say—suppose this panel comes out and says okay, here is where kids are; most of them know this much; most of them don't know these other things—how does that get translated into something that people can deal with in a policymaking framework so that they say we are not achieving our goal, we are achieving our goal, we are one-third of the way, we need to jumpstart this thing.

Yes, Dr. Forgiione.

Mr. FORGIONE. Building off of the previous comment, I can reflect back on our own situation of how to move toward maximum standards, and I think you have to come to some understanding of how much is enough, and that is what you want. I mean, it can't just be a reporting.

What I would hope you would do—and I am supportive of what I hear Gordon kind of outlining—is don't uncouple this from the Governors and the States right now by putting it in the panel. That is too easy. Force us to be at the table broadly, to be articulating, because we are all going to demand how much is enough, and that is going to be a consensual process. But I would think, Senator, that we may not let each other down. I think we all realize we are not doing well. Our children are not adequately prepared. So now what we have a chance to do is to stake out some new terrain.

I think as we went into the mastery test in Connecticut, there was a parallel. By moving into these higher levels of competencies that you want, where people don't know how they are doing, you tend to liberate expectation, to really go for the gold.

So I would hope you would do that.

What I'm worried about if you created the panel as I hear it, it might become an exercise over here that we in the States will uncouple from, not feel a tightness, or in fact they may bully us through some edict.

I think if you could keep, as Gordon was saying, some group monitoring but force the articulation of that across the jurisdictions of the executive, legislative, and through the intergovernmental process—I mean, I think you've got to create a vehicle, but I believe we do want to enunciate that. Right now, I am looking at school profiles for the first time in Connecticut's history. We are looking to get a sense of where we should set targets. And I think this discussion that you are talking about is one that we are going to participate in and look to as a counterpart. So I worried about the uncoupling that a panel over here will go set something, but we in fact will not see it as ours, and that would not be in our best interest.

Senator BINGAMAN. I guess I'm still unclear as to who is supposed to set benchmarks. If these folks don't—that is Gordon's position, that these folks should not do that. I still have real doubts as to whether the Congress and the Governors and the President have the expertise or the continuity or whatever to set benchmarks in a meaningful way.

I mean, if we were to legislate benchmarks, I can tell you that would be a disaster because as soon as somebody proposed what the benchmark ought to be in a certain area, somebody else would say, well, the heck with that, I can raise the ante on you; and it would be very difficult for anybody to vote for a lower standard of performance. So it is not something that can be accomplished as a political matter very intelligently, I don't believe.

I don't like the idea of just saying everybody sets their own benchmarks around the country. Maybe it is too simple-minded to think there ought to be benchmarks. I don't know—Ms. Fuhrman.

Ms. FUHRMAN. I reiterate, I think it is part of the panel's responsibility, and I don't think one should conceive of the panel as something removed from the Governors, the President and the Congress. They should be of the Governors, the President and the Congress, representing, and with stature similar to the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations where people sense that it is an intergovernmental partnership that also has enormous expertise and respect, so that it can recommend benchmarks.

Someone needs to interpret the data that is being monitored. Someone needs to say in 1995, okay, we are falling short in math, but the reason we are falling short in math is because of what is happening between grades four to eight, and we need to revise the year 2000 mark being first in math and science, and we need to think about being first at this particular level. That kind of interpretation goes beyond monitoring.

I am not suggesting that this panel make policy. Obviously elected officials at every level of government are going to have to do that. I am suggesting that this panel call attention to appropriate benchmarks, to research and development needs that arise around what it is learning from the monitoring strategies, and also the kinds of implementation strategies that can be translated by elect-

ed officials into specific policy, the sort of general directions for policy. Let's focus on problem solving in grades K thru 3, because our monitoring information shows that that is not there to lead into grades four to eight—those kinds of issues.

Senator BINGAMAN. Yes, Mr. Ambach.

Mr. AMBACH. Senator, it is absolutely essential in any governmental enterprise of setting standards to connect the process of setting standards with the real power or authority to do anything about it. That is what concerns me most. We have now and we will continue to have, I believe, in this country multiple standards being set.

I hear nobody arguing that if we move to having a national standard for mathematics performance that that is meant to supersede standards which might be set in several States, or standards that might be set in the local school districts.

The whole business about trying to set certain national goals for education is to set certain targets for the Nation as a whole. But I hear nobody arguing, certainly not with the Governors' Association or the President, that those are meant to supersede local or State standards for education.

Now, the issue at the Federal level is how do you connect the setting of goals, objectives or standards on various assessment measures with the power or authority to do anything about it, to be able to legislate new acts, to commit resources to new directions and so on. That is clearly the responsibility of the Congress and of the President.

And to return directly to your question, who does anything if in 1995 the panel turns up information to the effect that we are way off on what anybody thought would be the proper process in order to reach the goal, the council or the panel wouldn't have any authority to do anything about it anyway. It has got to be carried back into committees, subcommittees, congressional processes, and with the President at the national level in order to be able to do something about it, and it seems to me that is the proper framework to think about—this distinction between what the power of a panel would be by information and independent monitoring or assessment versus the authority or the power with the Congress and the President who will be pressed to do something about it at that point.

Senator BINGAMAN. I guess my concern still is a little bit—suppose we get to 1995, we've got this panel set up, and they issue a report saying this is how people are doing. Someone has to put that in context and say that is either good or it is bad or it is mediocre or it is getting us where we want to be or it is not. I'm not clear as to whether you think it would be appropriate for this panel to say here it is 1995; we are nowhere near where we need to be to achieve the goals that were set for the year 2000. I mean, is that an appropriate function for this panel?

Mr. AMBACH. Yes, that's exactly what it says. But then the question is does it go the next step, which is to say—

Senator BINGAMAN. This is how to get there.

Mr. AMBACH. That's correct—or change the goal.

Senator BINGAMAN. You don't have a problem, then, with taking the general goal, taking the 25 objectives underneath is, and taking

any other criteria that are identified to determine whether we are moving toward the goals and coming out each year and saying we are dead in the water in this particular area, there doesn't seem to be anything going on, and there is no indication that we are accomplishing what the country set out to accomplish.

Mr. AMBACH. That is exactly what they should do. That is exactly what I am indicating their function should be by way of these six points that I have made.

Senator BINGAMAN. And your point, Ms. Fuhrman, is that they should go the next step and say we are in terrible trouble in this particular area, and we would recommend the following?

Ms. FUHRMAN. But the following not be specific policies for States or for the Federal Government; the following being we need this kind of research and development, or we need to focus on problem solving in math, or we need to stress science experimentation—general implementation strategies. And we need to do that in certain grades, within a certain time, and then people will have to figure out at each level of government what policies support those kinds of general goals.

Senator BINGAMAN. Let me ask, the way we set this up, we've got sort of a two-stage thing in the bill. One is an interim council report which we had in here recommending a set of national goals. That has already been done, and the Governors have indicated that they've got the 25 criteria. But then the next was to include a series of reasonable steps for measuring the implementation and success of the recommendations of the council.

Is it an appropriate thing to have a one-year time frame where this group would design a proper measurement tool and essentially say this is what a report card needs to look like in order to assess progress toward the goals that have been identified by the President and the Governors and the Congress? Is that an appropriate thing to do for a year before they actually start getting into the business of preparing an assessment as such? Does that make sense?

Mr. AMBACH. It is absolutely essential. A year indeed may even be tight. I would note again, as an example of what happens with NAEP. The NAEP system for 1994 is right now on the drawing board, 1994, and the whole question about whether we're going to have resources available and the design in place for NAEP, changing the content of certain of those exams for 1994 is an issue which is before us now.

Senator BINGAMAN. Is there any planning going on—the President's goal was that we should assess students in those five subject areas—math, science, social studies, history—

Mr. AMBACH. It was mathematics, science, history, English or the language arts, and geography was the fifth one.

Senator BINGAMAN. OK. Now, is there anything on the drawing board now to actually give us the ability to assess how students are doing in those five areas by NAEP?

Mr. AMBACH. Are you speaking nationwide?

Senator BINGAMAN. Nationwide, yes. The last I heard, NAEP was not planning anything through at least the first half of this decade. They didn't feel they had the resources to plan any assessment in several of those five. Is that wrong?

Mr. AMBACH. Senator, you have to make a distinction between whether it is the nationwide NAEP or whether it is the State-by-State.

Senator BINGAMAN. Yes, okay. So we are doing some nationwide assessment in each of those five?

Mr. AMBACH. Oh, yes, surely.

Senator BINGAMAN. But not State-by-State?

Mr. AMBACH. No. The authority, you see, that Congress established for State-by-State was a limited authority in order to test it out. It was in fact one grade level in 1990, and then adding grade level in one subject in 1992. That is as far as that goes as a pilot test.

Senator BINGAMAN. So it is eighth grade in math this year, and then in 1992 it is what—eighth grade and fourth grade.

Ms. FUHRMAN. And fourth grade reading, I think.

Senator BINGAMAN. Math and also reading in the fourth grade.

Mr. AMBACH. That's correct. Senator, if I could, that's by 1992. And once again, State by State, there is nothing in authority to do this beyond 1992.

Mr. FORGIONE. Recently the NAEP advisory board, called NAGB, I guess, released in the Federal Register a request for where should they be going. I find this difficult because here they are asking almost do you think we should get in to the arts; and yet when you look at their budget, and you find out they can't do well what they are doing, this is where you are going to undermine confidence, and this is where I think we do need some national blueprint and consensus because it just gets to be people don't take it seriously.

I just got across my desk yesterday, with a month's notice, that I can be in the international reading assessment. Now, I want an international indicator for Connecticut. This is the first time I have heard of it, Senator. It is a wonderful idea. Someone has linked up an international test in reading, and they are offering States. But you know what the budgets are like in States, and how you have to plan 18 months ahead and give leadership. So I think you are at the point of really trying to get the blueprint out, let us understand the commitment, and give us time to build the infrastructure because this is an information system we are building.

So I worry about these just ad hoc activities because it is not building confidence, and that is when people won't put their best into the test.—It takes hard work to build good assessment, but intellectually people won't get into it if they are not confident it is going to be there, and it is going to be of quality.

As I see NAEP right now, NAEP is a runt. It is not what we want. It is not something I would want to give in Connecticut. If it weren't for my commissioner's commitment and our commitment to be in the State-by-State, I would be very reluctant. But that is a very important purpose, so we want to be there with NAEP, but again, as Gordon said, it is a resource issue. So I would recommend that you do give time to give lead time.

Senator BINGAMAN. Dr. Forgione, let me ask in the case of Connecticut, if you had a real well-designed national set of tests on the lines that you were describing there in your testimony, and those were given by NAEP nationwide, what realistically would Connecticut want to do with those? Would you want to give them there

in the Connecticut schools also so as to get comparisons between schools or between school districts—or, how far down would you take those, and what would you see as the main value of them?

Mr. FORGIONE. I think this is an ideographic issue. State-by-State has very different purposes. In Connecticut, NAEP is seen as giving us something we don't have in terms of the international and national. So I would want a periodic benchmark to see how my students are doing. I'd believe I had built rigorous tests. That is to be demonstrated, Senator. You know, you think you are doing this. You don't give it outside your boundaries, so you don't know if it is really tough unless you fail enough kids, and that's not a criterion; you want the right stuff.

So what NAEP does by linking with States will let us reflect on are we setting our standards high enough, are we getting the kinds of outcomes we want. We only know that. I am not much of a runner, so I don't want to go up against real runners; but if I run against people of my age, how am I doing? Am I about average? So that is where the national assessment will give us an essence of productivity.

We in education don't know how much you can gain from one investment. So in Connecticut, I would want a periodic NAEP to balance against my more elaborate blueprint. But for the Nation I would hope where they don't have a lot of quality assessments, this kind of investment, that NAEP could replace some other testing and give them better information.

I think that is where we are building capacity, and Gordon and his organization has been a leader in this. There can't be more testing on top of what we are doing. It has to be efficient. Instruction is what we are about. Testing is a vehicle to reflect on that.

So I would hope that NAEP would be a resource.

In your paper, I did want to comment—I don't hope NAEP is annual. I think a biennial NAEP would be wonderful, to come in and look in a good, comprehensive way, because otherwise you are taking over purposes you want States to have. You don't want to let States out of accountability, just like I don't want to let districts out of accountability—

Senator BINGAMAN. We don't require any accountability by States now. You say you don't want to let them out—your State is at the forefront in getting this done. There are a lot of States that are not. Are you suggesting that we should require States to do this annually, to do some of this testing annually, and only do it nationally by NAEP?

Mr. FORGIONE. What I mean is you are building an understanding in the public that information is important. Commissioners and Governors will start to respond to that. I don't want people just to take NAEP as a solution. You should build an assessment to answer the questions you want answered, your values. We are very pluralistic in America, and even within Connecticut, so I don't want people to adopt NAEP blindly. I want them to agree to the definition of higher-order math competency. That is a rigorous definition. It is not the typical definition.

So you can't just buy a test. The test has to match what you want it to achieve. That is where John Cannell has been correct. People have used norm reference tests poorly. They don't tell you

what Pat knows and doesn't know; they say Susan and Gordon are better than Pat. They are good at that, but they don't give you diagnostic information. But we in education use them improperly.

I hope today, with your leadership and the leadership of the Governors, we will be more thoughtful in what we do. But that is going to take capacity building as an issue.

Senator BINGAMAN. OK. Well, I think it has been helpful. I appreciate the testimony very much. We will continue to move ahead and try to do something if we possibly can.

Thank you all for coming out to testify today.

Mr. AMBACH. Senator, may I just say one more time how much we appreciate the time and the direction that you have given on this very important set of issues and that your staff has as well.

I think what you are hearing from all of us is that there is no question about the necessity for having an expanded availability of assessment information and indicators about education progress in this country. There is no question that they must be associated with national goals so that we have a way to know whether we are there in 2000, or how far away we are and at checkpoints along the way.

The issues, and I think particularly the ones that we have addressed mostly this morning about what is the right governance structure to deal with it, do hinge in large part I think on what final actions may be taken in the Congress on the whole question of adoption of the goals.

What I have tried to do at any rate is to see if we can't help to see that in perspective and keep the focus on what is a central piece that is missing, but not get into duplication or overlap for what are other authorities or responsibilities.

Thank you very much.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you very much.

Let me just indicate that we will keep the record open for another week or so for additional statements or comments that people wish to make and have included.

[Additional copy submitted to the committee follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY BILL HONIG, SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Thank you for the opportunity to support and comment on the National Education Report Card Act of 1990. I would like to commend the authors for this outstanding effort to produce a comprehensive national accountability bill. I believe this legislation will provide the nation's leaders and educators the opportunity to take action and create a strong vision of the next stages of education reform for our country. The educational reform movement that has been sweeping the nation has started to produce results. Test scores are rising, students are taking more academic courses, and the dropout rate is showing slow but steady progress. Although significant improvements have been made in individual States, the establishment of a comprehensive national reform strategy is mandatory if we are to continue to improve student performance and maintain the United States' eminence as a world-class competitor. The future productivity of our economy and the quality of life as we know it depends on our success in these efforts.

The first charge of the National Council on Education, as established in this bill, is to set goals to be achieved by the beginning of the 21st century. Setting national education goals for the year 2000 is a good first step, but as the bill acknowledges, a successful strategy to improve student performance demands much more. It requires a performance assessment system and improvements in methods and procedures for assessing and attaining the goals. The strategy must simultaneously attend to cur-

ricular goals, instructional materials, teacher preservice and education, administrator leadership training, and assessment for both teacher use and public accountability.

The national reform agenda must be comprehensive and focus on three fronts. First, the guiding principles of reform must be agreed upon. Reform goals and expectations must reflect a clear vision of the curricular and instructional strategies that are required to produce the desired outcomes for a diverse student population. Currently, much is known about these strategies, but implementation is not widespread. Implementing curricular and instructional improvements will produce the desired results. Second, we must train teachers already in the classroom to teach this more sophisticated curriculum. As a nation, we must invest sufficient capital in staff development to ensure that States can deliver the high quality training that is needed. Third, there must be an accountability system that not only provides information to educators and the public about improvements in student performance, but also holds schools and districts accountable for results. The accountability system should reward schools and districts for success, and at the other end of the spectrum there should be intervention strategies for low-performing schools.

In California we have achieved substantial gains as a result of such a comprehensive approach. From 1983 to 1988, 12th-grade test scores improved one whole grade equivalent in mathematics and one-half grade in reading. For three-quarters of a million junior-high-school students, the gains were even more impressive. From 1986 to 1989, 8th graders improved an average of one-half grade for all subjects.

Out of a senior class of 250,000 in California, 50,000 additional seniors now take a third year of science; over 40,000 more take a fourth year of English, and a similar number a third year of math.

The pool of seniors from which we draw most of our professional and business talent—those who score above 450 on the verbal portion of the Scholastic Aptitude Test and above 500 on the math portion—has grown by 21 percent in verbal and 24 percent in math from 1983 to 1989. Overall, the number of test takers has increased 17 percent. The number of Advanced Placement Tests taken and passed during the past 5 years has more than doubled, to over 50,000. And the dropout rate has shrunk by 18 percent in the past 3 years.

These improvements have been made despite the increasing challenges and demands of an exploding annual growth in enrollment, and an expanding minority school-age population. Currently, 53 percent of our students are members of racial/ethnic groups other than white, and 16.5 percent are limited-English-proficient. It is estimated we will serve an additional 1.6 million more students in the next decade, and many will be immigrants. The gains in performance achieved by our minority and limited-English speaking students are comparable to overall improvements. The percent of minority SAT takers in California has increased from 35 percent to 45 percent in the past 5 years.

The University of California requires students to complete a course of study for admission known as the a-f courses. The increase in a-f completions for minority students over the last 5 years is impressive—Hispanic and black students have made respective increases of 27 percent and 48 percent. And the dropout rates have fallen significantly. Between the classes of 1986 and 1989, the dropout rate for Hispanic students fell 18.3 percent, the rate for Asians dropped 17.8 percent, the American Indian rate is down 18.8, and the dropout rate for black students decreased 12.9 percent.

The crucial question is: What caused these gains? We believe the answer lies in how we approached the reform effort and the steps we are taking to ensure its success. Building on the success we have realized in California, and recognizing that nationally we must invest selectively in those strategies with a high potential for leveraging the whole system, I believe that the following programs are our targets of opportunity.

- Accountability as a Force for Reform
- Setting Goals and Strengthening Assessment
- Investment of Sufficient Capital in Staff Development
- Develop and Incorporate Technology
- Restructure Schools
- Encourage Parent and Business Partnerships
- Complete the Equity Agenda

ACCOUNTABILITY AS A FORCE OF REFORM

A thorough strategy for educational reform requires that accountability be comprehensive. First, measures of student attainment and other valued results must be

developed. The accountability system should provide information about all groups of students, whether college-bound or entering the work-force, disadvantaged or privileged, male or female, and of all ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. The existence of gaps in the accountability program risks the possibility that some groups of students will be left behind or that some aspects of the school program will not show improvement.

The accountability system must reinforce the vision of reform. Over the last few years, a consensus has emerged about what students need to learn, especially in the basic educational areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. We must go beyond these basic skills to a more demanding curriculum that develops higher level skills. To be effective citizens and workers, our nation's students must be able to communicate in writing and present ideas clearly and forcefully. They must be taught to think, be independent, adapt, and work with others to solve problems. Four of the national goals proposed by the President and the nation's governors at the September, 1989 Education Summit are goals for student performance. These broad national goals, reinforced by a comprehensive accountability system, must be translated to student performance standards reflective of a more challenging curriculum.

Finally, the accountability system should provide incentives and rewards for the most successful schools. At the other end of the spectrum, the system should provide intervention strategies for low-performing schools to improve their performance.

SETTING GOALS AND STRENGTHENING ASSESSMENT

The broad goals for student performance must be translated into performance standards, targets must be set, and assessments to measure progress must be devised. From general goal statements standards for performance that relate directly to the real world of students should be set. A good place to begin is with the scales developed by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for reporting national results in reading, math, science, and writing. Performance standards should be set at two levels—"advanced" and "adept." The highest level, advanced, approximates the level performance needed to succeed in college studies. Adept indicates having the skills required for job success. For example, national performance targets should include increasing the number of seniors who can read at the adept level to 60 percent, use numbers to solve complex problems to 75 percent, and compose a persuasive essay to 50 percent.

We should also aim at improving students' proficiency in science and history, increasing the number who attend college, and lowering the dropout rate to 10 percent. And standards should be developed for the 5th and 8th grades.

Each State and locality must set its own targets based on the national goals. If a typical high school has 300 seniors, 120 of whom are at that adept level, the school must educate another 6 students a year for 10 years as its share to reach the national goals.

In addition, assessments must be changed from mainly multiple choice, factual-recall questions to performance-based tasks such as writing and problem-solving. It is important to note that this approach allows for flexibility. Districts will have the flexibility to develop their own instructional strategies to meet targets, and they can use different assessment methods to show progress.

INVESTMENT OF SUFFICIENT CAPITAL IN STAFF DEVELOPMENT

We must train teachers already in the classroom to teach a more sophisticated curriculum. And we need to improve our recruiting, preparing, and certifying of teachers; provide leadership training for principals, and improve technical assistance to districts.

If we are going to increase the return in our educational investment, we must increase our expenditures on human resource development, to ensure the highest payoff, more staff development resources should be made available to the State education agencies. There is a feeling that it is not cost effective to invest all staff development resources directly at the local level. Investments at the State and regional levels are necessary to lever the quality of local expenditures. State and regional agencies enjoy economies of scale, and are able to attract recognized experts to develop and deliver professional development activities.

DEVELOP AND INCORPORATE TECHNOLOGY

The technology will soon exist to give teachers state-of-the-art support in science, math, and other subjects. We need a massive software-development and training effort to assist instruction in the classroom and as a method of teacher training.

This development effort is ideally undertaken at the federal level; although it will take an initial investment of funds, it could pay huge dividends.

RESTRUCTURE OUR SCHOOLS

We should unleash the talent of educators to tackle important issues and improve student performance. Once we establish clear expectations, and agree on standards and ways of measuring them, we must move out of the schools' way to allow teachers and principals to do their jobs. We must ensure that the necessary technical assistance and staff development are available.

ENCOURAGE PARENT AND BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

If parents read to their children, assure that they do their homework, and monitor their performance, students' achievement will soar dramatically. Effective parent-involvement programs have been developed that cost only \$10 to \$15 per child.

COMPLETE THE EQUITY AGENDA

We should fully fund programs for at-risk children and expand programs that prevent later failure, such as prenatal and neonatal health care, preschool, and coordinated family services.

I am very enthusiastic about S. 2034. Its provisions signify to our nation's public that as educators we are willing to be held accountable, that we will work cooperatively to implement reforms, and we will publicize the results of our efforts. An important part of the implementation strategy for this legislation is ensuring that each State establishes specific targets and provides each school and district with information regarding performance and progress.

We cannot, however, improve the productivity of our nation's schools without additional resources. I do not believe that these strategies I am recommending will require huge increases in funding. But in order to ensure the highest pay off, more resources need to be devoted to the supply side of staff development, assessment, and curriculum development. The major strength in having State education agencies provide leadership in these crucial reform areas is that a comprehensive State strategy will acknowledge the multiple goals of reform and will link funding to these goals. The economies of scale indicate that it is more cost effective to plan and develop programs with a comprehensive State vision. It is then possible to pull together the best talent and ensure a collaborative process among the experts including teachers, principals, district administrators, professional organizations, and the universities.

I would like to thank Senator Bingaman and the committee members for their leadership in developing this important federal legislation. We strongly support your bill and will assist in any way we can to achieve early enactment.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you again.

[Whereupon, at 10:52 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION REPORT CARD ACT OF 1990

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1990

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ARTS AND HUMANITIES, OF THE
COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9 a.m., in room SD-430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Jeff Bingaman, presiding.

Present: Senator Bingaman.

Also Present: Senator Kerrey.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR BINGAMAN

Senator BINGAMAN. We'll go ahead and call the hearing to order.

Last September the President and the governors met for their Education Summit at Charlottesville and determined six critical areas of need: children's readiness for school; math and science training; the high school dropout rate; adult illiteracy; teacher training and recruitment, and substance abuse in schools.

After that meeting the President in his State of the Union Address announced a set of goals that needed to be reached during this decade. The purpose of this hearing is to take another step or at least look at what is happening with regard to another part of what was discussed in Charlottesville and that is how to assess progress toward those goals.

A joint statement issued at the summit stated, and this is a quote from that statement: "When goals are set and strategies for achieving them are accepted, we must establish clear measures of performance and then issue annual report cards on the progress of students, schools, the States and the Federal Government."

We had two hearings last fall in the Governmental Affairs Committee focused on the procedure that might be followed and the mechanism that might be established to assess that progress, and we had experts from around the country who had devoted most of their professional careers to assessing educational performance.

Mr. Cross was kind enough to testify at one of those hearings.

One conclusion that was reached, I believe, by virtually all of the witnesses was that there currently is no effective mechanism in place, and was not at that time, for measuring individual school performance relative to established national education goals.

There is not enough data to make State-by-State comparisons except perhaps after this year in the area of math for 8th graders.

It was clear from those hearings that we need more information about the quality of education as well as information about the conditions under which education occurs. It was clear that there needed to be established some effective ways to measure progress.

I introduced early this year, with the strong support of many members of this committee and others in the Senate, a National Report Card Act of 1990, and that is the bill we will be discussing some in the testimony today. The main thrust of that was to establish an independent panel which could implement and assess this annual report card that the President and the governors talked about in Charlottesville.

The panel clearly, as contemplated in the bill, would be comprised of distinguished individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds but also recognized for their experience and commitment to educational excellence.

We had another of these hearings in July of this year in this subcommittee, and at that time took additional testimony on the subject. Since that hearing occurred, the governors and the President's representatives met in Mobile, AL and at that meeting established a National Educational Goals Panel. That panel is charged with overseeing the development and implementation of the National Education Progress Reporting System, and it was to develop and establish appropriate measures to assess progress toward the goals that were discussed last year in Charlottesville.

Unfortunately—at least, unfortunately from my perspective—the governors and the President chose to ignore the need for an independent panel. Instead they set up a panel comprised of six governors and four administration officials, and they added to that four ex officio members of Congress to be appointed by the leadership of Congress. But all members of the panel clearly were political officeholders, political appointees, in effect the people responsible for making and implementing the national and State education policy. As the people responsible for making and implementing that policy, they had made arrangements so that they themselves would be assessing the progress in reaching those goals. In my view that would amount to essentially shielding some of us, those in Congress included, who have real responsibility for reaching these goals, from any real accountability in this respect.

They also provided in establishing their panel that the panel could only act, as I understand it, if 75 percent of its members, or eight of the ten voting members, would agree. It is my belief that if the spirit of the Education Summit is to be kept alive, and we are truly looking at improving the quality of education during this decade, we need a nonpolitical process to measure that progress toward those educational goals; we need a panel that will be empowered to hold all of those involved in education and education policy accountable, and that would include policymakers in government, in the Executive Branch, at the State level, in Congress, and also people involved in the education process itself.

I think we are all deeply committed to improving our schools and to having accountability in education. I am just concerned that these important issues would be compromised by a panel established as proposed by the governors and the Executive Branch representatives at the meeting in Mobile.

At this hearing we are going to hear testimony on the important question of how the panel should be constituted, how it would function and the need that exists for it.

Our first witness is the representative from the administration, Mr. Chris Cross, who is the Assistant Secretary in the Office of Educational Research and Improvement in the Department of Education. We are very pleased to have him here. He is very knowledgeable on these issues, and we appreciate his willingness to testify.

After Mr. Cross testifies, we have two additional panels that we will hear from.

Go right ahead, please.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER T. CROSS, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, WASHINGTON, DC.

Mr. CROSS. Thank you, Senator, and good morning. It is a pleasure to be here again and to have an opportunity to talk to you about many of these important issues.

Mr. Chairman, your proposed bill shows a deep conviction that achieving our national goals will also require a commitment to improving our knowledge of where we stand as we progress toward achieving those goals.

We agree that the Nation must have a barometer, a report card of its progress toward a dramatically improved education system. To develop such a report card, we need to consider three questions: First, what should be assessed; second, how best to assess our progress, and third, how to report on progress in a timely, accurate and meaningful way to the American people.

The President and the governors have announced a bold new set of goals for education. These national goals were developed with the participation and advice of many individuals and organizations interested in education.—Comment and advice was solicited from over 200 organizations. A well-publicized hearing was held at which over 50 experts testified on each of the goals before governors and senior administration officials. Also, several briefings for professional associations and other organizations were conducted.

Earlier this year the President and the governors announced the six national education goals, and, at their winter meeting agreed to commit themselves to creating a bipartisan group "to oversee the process of determining and developing appropriate measurements and reporting on the progress toward meeting those goals."

At the governors' annual meeting held in Mobile, AL on July 29-30, the President and the governors agreed to establish a bipartisan panel consisting of four senior-level Federal Executive Branch officials—Secretary Cavazos, Governor Sununu, OMB Director Darman, and Domestic and Economic Policy Advisor Roger Porter—six governors—Ashcroft of Mississippi, Bayh of Indiana, Branstad of Iowa, Campbell of South Carolina, Gardner of Washington, and Romer of Colorado—and the Majority and Minority Leaders of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, and the House Minority Leader all as ex officio members. For the first year the panel will be chaired by Governor Romer of Colorado.

The panel will operate on the principle of consensus, just as have all of the meetings to date been which have occurred between the governors and the administration.

The panel will operate in order to determine the indicators used to measure the national goals, including interim indicators; to determine benchmarks and baselines against which progress may be evaluated; and to report annually, beginning in 1991, on progress toward reaching the goals.

The panel will consult with experts in the field of research, assessment and measurement in fulfilling its responsibilities and will make recommendations to the President, the Congress and the governors for needed improvements in national and international measurement systems.

The panel's annual report, which will first be issued in late September of next year, will also include information on the Federal Government's action to fulfill those responsibilities agreed to at the Charlottesville Summit.

In addition to the annual national report, each governor will make individual reports on the progress his or her State is making toward achieving those goals.

Mr. Chairman, I have reviewed your bill, S. 2034, which would establish a statutory Council on Education Goals. We have several major concerns with this legislation which I would like to share with you.

First, the bill appears to set aside the national goals, an effort that has already been under way for more than a year, beginning with preliminary papers and discussions prior to and including the summit. Following the summit, as I have noted, there were numerous meetings with several groups to consider possible goals and objectives, and final decision meetings between the President and the governors.

The goals and objectives have been formally announced nationwide, and the administration and the governors are moving ahead toward the next steps.

The most recent Gallup poll of the public's attitudes about schools tells us that roughly 45 percent of Americans feel that the six goals should be given a "very high priority" during the next 10 years. To interject at this point yet another group to make further recommendations on possible goals over the next one to 2 years would cause unnecessary delay in getting on with the urgent business of restructuring our educational system, motivating our teachers, students and parents to achieve the goals, and developing appropriate measures to monitor progress. It would also risk fragmenting the growing national consensus behind educational reform.

In addition, the bill would call for rethinking the national goals by the Council which would then recommend its own set of goals and potentially modify those goals as the decade goes along. This approach is counterproductive. What we need are constant goals, approached with firm resolve, as we are doing with the already adopted national goals.

The work which is under way by the President and the governors has included the advice and participation of education and research experts who have provided a broad range of advice on these

complex issues. At this time, these efforts do not need to be duplicated.

A legislated mandate here is neither needed nor desirable. There is nothing included in the proposed bill that cannot be done under existing law. Moreover, S. 2034 would rob the current effort of much needed flexibility. Establishing the proposed Council by law would discourage direct negotiations among the governors, the President and other parties which would most likely inhibit the constructive development of measurement policy.

The administration's position is that we should proceed under existing law and continue the close working relationship between the President and the governors and the related support work of agencies such as the Departments of Commerce, Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and others. The bipartisan panel includes the congressional leadership in partnership with the President and the governors. The panel would seek the advice and involvement of a broad range of advisors to determine appropriate indicators and benchmarks. The panel will issue annual reports—a national report card—as we work together to achieve the national goals.

We recognize the significant work of the Congress in the area of support for educational assessment: The trial State-by-State student learning assessments under way through NAEP and improved research and statistics efforts.

Through the National Goals Panel, the President, Congress, and the governors have formed a team to monitor national, State and local progress toward meeting the national goals.

Much important work remains. Over the next decade we can waste little time or energy given the task before us. A strong partnership among the President, the Congress, the governors, the education leaders at the State and local level and all appropriate Federal agencies is an important start. Together we must work to assist those ultimately responsible for the success or failure of our mission—the students.

We must make sure that our efforts, programs and regulations enhance their success. The instruments and means of assessment must be consistent with our high standards outlined in the national goals, and we must focus on support for and assistance to those parents and families, teachers and school-based educators and others in the communities and workplaces that are responsible for student success.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would be pleased to answer any questions.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you very much.

First let me say I agree with you that the panel should not be establishing different goals. That same point was made very clearly in earlier hearings, and we are in agreement on that.

I think there is an issue, though, and I would be interested in your view on it. Taking the very broad goals that the President and the governors have announced and turning those into measurable objectives so that progress can be determined is another step. Do you see the need for a panel to do that? I mean, am I right that there is another step in there—when you say we're going to be first in the world in math and science education, someone has got to

then say what that means and get fairly specific about it, or else it becomes sort of a wish.

Mr. Cross. That is correct, and I believe that the way the governors and the administration are planning to work this out is to have this panel which I mentioned, composed of the four administration people, the six governors and the four congressional members, meet with panels of experts around each of the specific goals so that the experts would be drawn in through that device and yet would not be the ones who would be ultimately responsible as is the case in your legislation where there is this outside panel.

I think the point here is that it is the governors and the administration who do bear responsibility and have said publicly that they want to be held accountable for this.

If I can draw an analogy, it would be a little bit like if you were in a congressional setting adopting a budget resolution and then turning over to a group of outsiders or experts the decision about what programs are going to be funded; or, in the Executive Branch example, to have a law passed and then to have some other people write the regulations and then turn them over to the department to be implemented.

I think again the people who are responsible and will be held accountable for those decisions need to be the ones who are in fact going to be there and making those decisions.

Senator BINGAMAN. I guess we may have a basic disagreement. I agree that the administration and the governors and Congress are among those who need to be held accountable, and that is what the whole purpose of my effort has been. But I think to say that they are the ones who will do the judging of whether we are making progress or not begins to strain credibility a little. All of the folks you are talking about are either running for office or are appointed by someone who is running for office and clearly have an interest in seeing to it that whatever report card is done is favorable so that they can demonstrate some progress if in fact they are responsible for progress or lack of progress.

My concern was that it is sort of like asking—to take your analogy about the Congress on the budget—asking the chairman and ranking member of the Budget Committee how they did after they complete their work; they obviously have a stake in it, they feel like they did great, and they will announce that with great assurance and conviction. There may be others on the outside who don't feel that comfortable that they have done a great job.

At any rate, I do think my own view would be that the best way to ensure a credible method of assessing progress is to get someone to do that assessing who doesn't have an immediate claim or benefit to be derived from a good assessment.

Mr. Cross. Senator, if I might say, I think ultimately it will be the American people—the parents, community leaders, business leaders—who will make the judgment of whether or not success is being made in achieving these goals. I think that is the important thing to keep in mind here. This is going to be done in a public process. You are going to have three very different sets of people represented in this panel between the governors, the administration and the congressional representatives, and to have what you are suggesting transpire almost suggests that there is going to be

some collusion here, which I don't think would occur, because I think it is going to be in everybody's best interest to have this as open as can be and to have it out on the table.

Senator BINGAMAN. Well, I guess my concern was heightened a little last week when I saw the President and Mr. Bennett hold a press conference and indicate that we were winning the drug war. We may be running the drug war in some respects, but I don't know that their presentation on it was totally balanced. I think there are many respects in which we are losing the drug war, and those did not get the same kind of coverage.

Mr. CROSS. But I think the difference here is that you would have created and have created under the administration and the governors' agreement a panel that does not just include people from one sector. If, for example, it is determined that the Federal Government isn't doing enough in some area, it will certainly be the governors who will call the Federal Government to task publicly. And the same thing would work in reverse.

Senator BINGAMAN. But how can they do that if in fact you need eight of the ten members—let me welcome Senator Kerrey, who has taken a vital interest in this subject; we are very pleased to have him here. Let me just finish a few more questions and then I'll turn it over to you for any statement you have and any questions.

As I understand the way this panel is established, eight of the ten members have to agree or the panel cannot act.

Mr. CROSS. That is only for action; it is not for criticism. And I am sure any forum in which somebody wants to have an opportunity to exercise the opportunity to critique what is going on will occur—just as it takes a majority vote in the Senate or in a committee, that does not keep those who may not be in the majority—

Senator BINGAMAN. So you are saying the individual members could speak out on their own, just as they can today, or just as they could before this panel was ever established.

Mr. CROSS. That's right.

Senator BINGAMAN. And I agree with that. But the panel itself could not vote to be critical of anybody absent eight of the ten agreeing; that's the way they've established it.

Mr. CROSS. That's right, 75 percent, as you said, eight of the ten.

Senator BINGAMAN. So at least two of the administration officials would have to agree with all of the governors in order for anybody to be critical of the administration.

Mr. CROSS. Right. I think it is important to note something that I said in passing in my statement this morning. During the whole past year when this process has gone on to involve the governors and the Executive Branch around the goals, there have been a lot of meetings which have occurred, some of which I have participated in, some of which I have not. But in none of those meetings has there ever been a vote. Everything has been done by reaching consensus. And I believe you will find that that would occur in this setting as well. If you look at the statements coming out of the governors' annual meeting down in Alabama back 6 weeks ago, you will find references to the expectation that this will operate—because there has been a suggestion that by having the congressional

members ex officio that that was not putting them on the same footing.

The comment that was made I believe by Governor Branstad and by some of the others was that in fact it is the expectation that this group will operate by consensus and very much with public presentations and with the opportunity for full discussion of these issues before any agreement is reached.

Senator BINGAMAN. Let me just say I agree that it is good to have consensus in the establishment of goals, but if you are going to have meaningful assessment of progress, I don't know if consensus is something you want to have in all respects. I mean, we have great consensus here in the Senate as long as everything is going great and we are talking about noncontroversial issues. When we get into rough water and we are really slugging it out on issues that there is basic concern about, then we don't have consensus, and I don't know that we should.

So I guess I am not particularly relieved to find that everything this panel does is going to be done by consensus. I really think maybe we would be better off if there was a little disagreement; it would demonstrate within the panel that they were coming to grips with the tough issues which have to be dealt with.

Mr. Cross. I don't think there is any problem in there being disagreement. It has certainly been the case, as I am sure you have followed the whole progress of the goal-setting exercise which has occurred. But in the end what has happened is people have been convinced that another viewpoint was in fact correct and have come around on that. I think that is one of the strengths of a process in which you have the people involved who are going to be involved here, is that these are people who have direct responsibility for what is going on within their States or within the particular area for which they have responsibility and are going to argue these points out until they in fact have all the views on the table.

Senator BINGAMAN. One other point you make in your testimony. You make the point, which I agree with, that the goals need to be consistent over a period of time, but then you indicate that establishing a panel, however the panel is constituted, establishing it in law in some way interferes with the ability of the panel to function appropriately. I guess I'm not too clear on that.

It seems to me if this is a set of goals that are going to drive our educational policy for the next 10 years, that is a reasonably long time as far as public policymaking goes, and it seems to me it would be eminently reasonable to establish it by law; whatever mechanism is established should be established by law so that it would have some permanence, and it would not depend upon which person happens to be President, which person happens to be governor at any particular time.

Mr. Cross. To give you an example of why I think flexibility might be required, we may face a situation down the road where it is determined that in addition to the membership that is there now, it may be determined that perhaps some additional folks, perhaps like school board representatives at either the State or the local level, might also be valuable people to have there. Again, the complexity of having it in law versus having it basically as an

agreement makes that much more difficult to achieve and to engineer.

Also, if you put it in law it gets thrown into being subject to a whole set of administrative guidelines and regulations around the Federal Advisory Committee Act as well that have some consequences which will, I think, slow down the progress of being able to move forward.

Senator BINGAMAN. Well, it seems to me if you don't have it in law the question will always arise if you add new people or delete people or change the make-up of it as to what was the motivation behind that; was someone beginning to swim upstream, was this consensus that was so important to maintain beginning to be challenged.

I think the idea that we'll all get together and work it out may not be an adequate solution to this kind of important problem over a ten-year period, which seems to be the thing.

Let me call on Senator Kerrey for any opening statement and any questions he has. He has been a strong advocate for an independent panel to do the assessing of educational goals.

Senator KERREY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Cross, to give a little bit of history on this matter, I have heard the chairman give a very short—as he uncharacteristically for politicians is apt to do—speech about education in which he essentially asserted that he campaigned for office on a platform that included a promise to work on education. I did the same thing. I am vitally concerned about education in Nebraska and would like to arrive at a point when I am through with my public service, either voluntarily or involuntarily, in the Senate to have a sense that schools are better because of what I did. That is exceedingly difficult to do. I am here 220 days a year, and I am back home about 100, and when I am back home, schools are usually not in session; I am usually back on the weekends or in the summer when there is no one around, so it is not as easy as it would appear.

Nonetheless I believe there is a legitimate role for Congress. I think there needs to be a stronger Federal involvement in public education.

Nonetheless I am also very much aware that it is possible for us to make it worse, and I am not terribly comfortable personally—and I will say this to you with respect—with the current model that basically requires us to pass a piece of legislation, have a Rose Garden ceremony perhaps 2 years after we get it introduced, hopefully in time to get it on our campaign brochures, and then have the U.S. Department of Education set up a new program office with 50 States doing the same thing a year later, perhaps, and then invitations for grant applications going out to the schools perhaps a year after that, all 5 years having gone by. And in Nebraska, each one of our classes has about 25,000 students, and so each one of those cohorts moves out into the work force as they go.

I also have some criticism of the way that the goals are put together. The "summit" so-called was not a people's summit; it was a summit of governors who got together at the request of the President. The President in fact selected the goals prior to the meeting even, in time for the State of the Union Message.

I must say that I endorse the goals nonetheless. The reason I make that identification is that I think the President selected some good goals—but they are not the people's goals. And what we have to do as a consequence of that is convince the people that these are worthy goals. There are 16,000 school districts in America educating 45 million students right now, and they are in control, basically, of our educational system. And we have got to convince the employers of the teachers and the employers of the superintendents and the principals that these goals not only are worthy but that we can achieve them.

And increasingly—perhaps because of the savings and loan problem and other sorts of things, perhaps just because it is difficult work being on a school board—increasingly I observe at home people are less convinced that anything they do can make a difference.

Again with respect, I have heard Secretary Cavazos say that all the reform efforts post'83 basically haven't done any good. Well, Mr. Secretary, that does not enable us to go out with a great deal of success and get more people involved. The news that those who worked like mad after 1983's "Nation At Risk" report and put a lot at risk themselves, both politically and economically, then had the Secretary tell us that all that was for naught is not very encouraging.

I observed in the process of those occasional report cards that what we need is in fact what the governors and the President proposed, and that is some method to evaluate how we are doing that is not only something that we trust but disaggregates the numbers sufficiently so that we know what to do—to go from point "A", which is where we are right now, and which is hopefully what the report card does, gives us a sense of where we are so everybody trusts it, and then disaggregates sufficiently so that 16,000 school districts know what to do, so it isn't just a piece of political rhetoric, so it isn't just a statement that goes out that takes the energy out of all the people who are participating in trying to improve it, but gives them some sense of what they need to do to move forward to achieve the goals.

I've got 25,403 3rd graders, the class of 2000, that are out there in public schools right now in Nebraska, and I'll guarantee you they are not going to be first in the world in mathematics by the year 2000—unless something is dramatically done differently. There are 25,403—I can get my arms around that number without needing a computer to get the job done. I can visualize 25,000 students. They've got family problems—I met with parents over the recess; one of the goals of having children prepared by the time they come to school is not going to be easy to get done, and it won't be just the U.S. Department of Education getting it done. We'll need Health and Human Services involved, we'll need State agencies involved, we'll need increasing parent involvement. We need to feel the same fear that has been generated in the United States of America as a consequence of comparing Saddam Hussein with Adolf Hitler with our own schools.

It is difficult to get that done. I understand. And if the panel that is assessing the goals is tainted with the concern that, well, maybe they are doing like all politicians, including myself, trying

to put the best light on my own accomplishments—if that is tainted and there is any suspicion at all, it seems to me that the evaluation is going to be ignored.

I am not opposed to the panel that the governors and the President want to put together. I could see a role for that, as well as the piece of legislation that Senator Bingaman has developed. I think in fact there is a role for both of them. I don't want to fall on my sword or have my 25,403 3rd graders fall on theirs as I argue which one of these is better.

I think the American people need to believe or, more precisely, Nebraska citizens, who I serve, need to believe that there is something that they can do that makes a difference; that we in fact do need to be better than what we are right now. And I personally am not persuaded that we need much more evaluation. We can sometimes study this thing completely off the edge.

I acquired one single piece of information in Nebraska—and I hear, by the way, all the time at home people saying, well, we are fourth in the Nation in ACT. Twenty-eight States take the test, and if we are fourth in the Nation in ACT we are in pretty good shape. Well, just one little piece of information disputes that. The University of Nebraska at Lincoln calls themselves "moderately selective." I told them when I was home that they should perhaps become consultants to the CIA because I thought that was a pretty good selection of phrases. They have a 21.5 average for ACT in mathematics. Forty percent of entering freshmen at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, that calls themselves "moderately selective", have to go back and take junior high school mathematics before they are eligible for college. And that is just the 50 percent that go on to school. That doesn't deal with the 50 percent upon whom I depend in the workplace to be profitable.

So we've got a real and present problem out there, and my hope is that both of these panels in fact, working together, can go to the American people and say there is a lot not only that needs to be done, but there is a lot that we can do successfully to prepare these 3rd graders and all of the K thru 12 public school students so that they are prepared as they enter the workplace, they are prepared as they enter the role of being citizens, they are prepared for all the problems they are going to face.

So Mr. Chairman, that was a lot longer than I wanted to, but I got involved in this particular issue as a consequence of listening to Senator Bingaman's urgency to move in public education, an urgency that I share, and I assure you although there will be disagreements that the objective of trying to improve the environment for our teachers and our students is likely to be shared.

Mr. Cross. Senator, I wonder if I might say a couple of things in comment.

Senator BINGAMAN. Go right ahead.

Mr. Cross. Let me set the record straight first with respect to the President's State of the Union Address of last January.

The goals which the President enunciated in the State of the Union were in fact agreed to prior to the State of the Union by the leadership of the Governors Association and by the President. I sat in many of those meetings myself and watched the participation,

the back and forth, and the agreement on that final set of six goals.

It is true they were not officially adopted by the governors until their mid-winter meeting here I believe it was in February. But in fact there had been a long process that preceded the State of the Union in which the governors were full participants.

Senator. Kerrey. Just to engage you a bit on that, you sat and watched which governors—all 50?

Mr. CROSS. No. I watched the leadership of the Governors Association.

Senator KERREY. So you had a leadership group—

Mr. CROSS. Who were communicating back to their colleagues.

Senator KERREY. But they did not represent the votes of these governors. I mean, I have been in governors associations as well, and we certainly assigned individual governors to meet and develop recommendations, but they did not carry my vote; they came back and—

Mr. CROSS. That's right. They were representatives of the Governors Association. As you know, it operates through task forces or a committee structure, and this was the committee on education, which was chaired by Governor Clinton and by Governor Campbell of South Carolina. They were the co-chairs of that. In addition, Governors Branstad and Gardner, as the two leaders of NGA itself, were very much involved in that, and they did take those back to the governors' mid-winter meeting at which they were formally adopted.

Second, I think we are moving into a time of really being able to talk much more about what is working. I was very taken last week—and I don't know if either of you had the chance to see the PBS and CBS programs last week on education—they were both excellent, on successive nights, Wednesday and Thursday, and if you have not seen them, I would comment you to get hold of the tapes because what was interesting here is they were not focused on what is wrong; they were focused on what is working and what can be done right.

In the case of the PBS show, it showed four schools and really did a very nice examination of what is working in those schools. CBS took some issues and went through a discussion of those. And I must say I found remarkable agreement between them and with myself in terms of my observations of what can be done and what can be improved.

I would also say that in terms of what needs to be done in the system, we do know a lot of it; we don't know all of it. You mentioned your concern about evaluation. There is a lot happening out there that is changing in the education environment today. Site-based management, I would mention just as one of the major things, as is occurring in Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, San Francisco and other places. We do need to look at that, and we do need to examine whether it is working.

But most important what we need to do is to get out to people to disseminate to them information on what is working and why it is working. The National Assessment of Educational Progress, with which you are both very familiar, in about 2 weeks will release the summary report of its findings for this year in the several subjects,

and it will look back over almost 20 years of the National Assessment. There are some very striking things in there about the issue around parents and their involvement, about the issue around what kids are doing in terms of homework and in terms of attention to school. And I think there are very important messages there that we all need to take some time and some trouble to get out to people.

And Senator, we would be glad to come back if you are interested in another few weeks and have a session around that because I think we have some very good information there, and it is the sort of thing which is not miraculous, but it needs to be communicated, and the message needs to be gotten through to parents that they do make a difference when they pay attention to what is going on in school, that they do need to communicate with the teachers and with the school officials, they do need to check on the homework that their kids are doing, they do need to be involved. And if there is anything that the record shows, it is that that is not occurring as it should have been occurring, and we have to change that slope back up again.

Finally, I would just add in concern around the goals that I think by having the governors and the officials that we have talked about here responsible for the measurement side of things that we will keep the focus on it. I think if you have it in a group of people who are not elected officials, the focus will diminish over time because these will be people who will be out of the limelight.

Senator BINGAMAN. Let me just comment on this point that Senator Kerrey made. Last week on Thursday I attended the conference that the Public Health Service had on Healthy People 2000, where they laid out the health goals for Americans for the year 2000 and also, of course, had a description of how those had been arrived at over a three-year period involving public health people and health professionals and citizens all around the country. They had some 750 witnesses at various hearings around the country. And I was struck by how different that process was than the one we are talking about here, where the President and the governors have a meeting in Charlottesville and announce.

Now, I read your testimony and I heard your testimony about the fact that they did have a hearing, and they did take input from various groups, but I think Senator Kerrey's point that these are not goals that have come from the grassroots up—these are goals that have come from the mountain down, and it is a very different process. Now, maybe the fact that they have come from the mountain down does allow them to get more headlines and more high-level attention, but it may really jeopardize whether or not the people who are in the schools teaching and administering and trying to make this system better will really feel the ownership that they need to. If you don't participate in the making of the goals, you may not be able to participate in the implementing of them very effectively.

Mr. CROSS. Senator, I might say that it is now six, 7 months since those goals were first publicized, and it has been amazing to me to watch the degree to which they have been adopted by various groups around the country. And I would be happy to submit for the record for you a listing of how those goals have been embraced by a

wide variety of organizations and people around the country, from State boards of education to associations like The Council of Great City Schools to local school boards—a wide variety of organizations.

Senator BINGAMAN. Well, I'm sure that's right, and I concur with Senator Kerrey that I support the goals. I think they are worthwhile goals, and if we can actually lay out a plan for implementation and get on with it, I think it would be terrific. But I don't know that you've got the buy-in that you need from everybody involved.

Let me ask a couple of other specifics. Assuming we go nowhere with legislation such as that which we have proposed here, when will this panel that the governors and the administration established issue their first report card?

Mr. Cross. It will be issued on the anniversary of the summit in 1991, which would be September 27-28 of 1991, about a year from now.

Senator BINGAMAN. About a year from now. That is the second anniversary of the Charlottesville Summit.

Mr. Cross. That's correct.

Senator BINGAMAN. And as you understand it, what will the report card contain?

Mr. Cross. That is yet to be determined by a meeting which will occur shortly of the panel that has been arranged between the governors and the others. That meeting will occur—I believe Governor Romer of Colorado is planning for that meeting to occur late September, early October.

I think in the absence of that meeting there is really not much that I can say specifically about that.

Senator BINGAMAN. One other concern that I have, and I think Senator Kerrey has expressed this at other times as well, is that you have some very, very busy people appointed to this panel. And usually, when you assign the Majority Leader of the Senate or the Speaker of the House or somebody like that to a panel, it winds up of necessity being delegated to staff to do the real work. And I assume that is true with Mr. Sununu and various other people in the administration; they have a lot of concerns in addition to this, and therefore staff deals with it. And I'm sure that is true of the governors as well. Who will actually do the work of preparing this report as you see it?

Mr. Cross. The agreement is that there will be a small staff that this panel will have, and that will be one of the discussion topics when the panel meets later this month or in early October. It will be a staff that will be responsible to the panel itself.

Senator BINGAMAN. Now, who would provide staff? We have not been requested by the administration to appropriate any funds to establish a staff. Is this something that would be done out of the Department of Education, or how would this be done?

Mr. Cross. I don't think there has been any agreement reached on that. There are several models that could be followed. One, it could be funded from outside sources; it could be funded by details from various agencies like the Census, like the Department of Education, like the Bureau of Labor Statistics and others. It could be funded partly through the governors and their own staff in education, which is quite good. There are a number of various people

who could contribute to this, but so far there has been no final determination on how that might work.

Senator BINGAMAN. Now, the chair of it is Governor Romer, and that is a one-year appointment, is that correct?

Mr. CROSS. Yes, that's right.

Senator BINGAMAN. So it is contemplated that each year the chair will change?

Mr. CROSS. I don't think it is contemplated that it would necessarily change each year, but in the nature of governorships, of course, which come up for re-election every two or 4 years, I think the agreement was to look at it every year to determine, of course, who is still in office and who is not.

Senator BINGAMAN. But it would be a governor at all times; that is the thought.

Mr. CROSS. That's correct, yes.

Senator BINGAMAN. But that governor would not hire the staff presumably because the staff would be constituted from a variety of Federal agencies; is that what I am hearing?

Mr. CROSS. I am just suggesting that is one of the models. It could be an entirely outside staff. Again, I don't know that there has been agreement reached about this at this point, but that will be one of the agenda items when they meet in another few weeks.

Senator BINGAMAN. OK. When is the next meeting to occur, again?

Mr. CROSS. All I know is they have been trying to set a date, and they have been looking at the period from the last week in September to the first few days in October. As of last week I had not heard a specific date.

Senator BINGAMAN. Senator Kerrey, do you have any additional questions of this witness?

Senator KERREY. I don't, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you very much. We appreciate your testimony.

Our first panel will be Ms. Millie Waterman, with the National PTA Legislative Program Committee; Dr. Erling Clausen, who is president of the American Association of School Administrators, and Mrs. Martha Fricke, who is president of the National School Boards Association.

Dr. Clausen, why don't you go ahead and start.

STATEMENTS OF DR. ERLING W. CLAUSEN, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, AND SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, BERKELEY HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT, BERKELEY HEIGHTS, NJ; MARTHA C. FRICKE, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION, ASHLAND, NE; MILLIE WATERMAN, MEMBER, NATIONAL PTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM COMMITTEE, MENTOR, OH; AND DR. PRESTON KRONKOSKY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SOUTHWEST EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT LABORATORY, AUSTIN, TX

Dr. CLAUSEN. My name is Erling Clausen. I am superintendent of schools in Berkeley Heights, NJ and am currently president of the American Association of School Administrators, AASA.

I am here today representing AASA, which is the professional organization of nearly 19,000 local school superintendents and other education executives.

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to testify on the development of a national report card as proposed in S. 2034. My comments will cover the views of AASA regarding S. 2034 and my experience in New Jersey, where we had a report card for one year.

We have some concerns at AASA about the proposed legislation under S. 2034. First, the assumption is implicit in S. 2034 that improved assessment and monitoring will lead to quality is at best questionable.

To make an analogy with business, education assessment and monitoring as envisioned in this bill are similar to those of inspecting parts in an auto plant that has no clear production goals.

Designing quality into the system forces us to look first at the important factors in learning that occur before the schoolhouse door opens each day—child well-being, family well-being, teacher/administrator preparation, employment practices, available resources—all of the things that Mr. Cross who just testified point to and certainly which Senator Kerrey made very clear in his comments.

After examination of those elements of education that precede schooling, we must examine the processes of schooling. We must examine the connection of schools with postsecondary education and the world of work to determine how those processes can be improved.

The second criticism we have of S. 2034 is that the information generated about the education system is so focused on one element, which is purely schooling. That information will incorrectly put the total responsibility for results on teachers and administrators. It is illogical to blame teachers and principals as the only or even the principal causes for the performance of a system that they did not create and do not control.

Responsibility for outcomes must be properly assigned in the total system, and responsibility for subprocesses or system elements must go to those who control the elements of the system.

Although I have no control over many of the fundamental causes of student learning, I am fortunate in being Superintendent in Berkeley Heights. The parents who send students to school in Berkeley Heights are able to provide the health, nutrition and care

that sends students to school ready to learn. Similarly, our property wealth allows us to afford the best teachers and administrators. We also have the funds to provide quality professional development opportunities and to maintain attractive learning environments.

The third criticism is that we feel that S. 2034 is redundant. The President and the governors have established goals, and according to the Gallup poll, these goals are widely acceptable. Governor Romer of Colorado who heads the task force on strategies to achieve the goals, the U.S. Department of Education, which is prepared to monitor progress, and educators have committed to the goals.

Most States have adopted the goals or variations on the goals, and goals specific to urban education based on the governors' goals are being refined. Because everything is on track with the goals it seems to AASA that the tasks of the proposed council are already done or under way through existing structures.

Finally, some thoughts on report cards. In New Jersey, we had a report card for 1 year. As I pointed out before, one of the problems with the report card is that it is very narrow in its scope, and I as an educator find it very difficult to equate growth and improvement as both of you have described it with a report card. It takes a great deal more than looking at one aspect of education. We need to look at all aspects—health, social services, everything that goes into the child's life.

As president of AASA, I have been proposing and working on the development or the acceptance of a Children's Investment Trust, which was designed by Jule Sugerman. That trust would in fact bring all of the people together who have an impact on education and would break down some of the barriers that we currently have which prevent the various agencies from working together. It would force health, social services, education, and every other agency which deals with children to focus on children instead of on their own bureaucracies.

The report card in New Jersey, as I said, only existed for 1 year, and it would be difficult to make very much of an analysis. However, one of the things that I found in Berkeley Heights that I feel is one of the dangers of a report card—we have a district where all of the elementary schools score in the 98th or 99th percentile. In one elementary school, the school as a body—and this is the way the report cards usually come down—scored 98.7. In another elementary school in town, the school scored 99.2. And believe it or not, this created a tremendous furor in the community.

Now, when we get to the point where five-tenths of one percent for an entire school becomes something that we have to deal with as a superintendent on a broad base and defend, then I think there is some reason to believe that the instrument itself was flawed.

I feel very strongly that rather than have a report card, we should resurrect the education summit, the summit which gives Congress a major role, passed in 1985 and already has an appropriation. However, congressional leadership and the President did not make the appointments necessary to hold the conference. I would suggest that we conduct a fundamental analysis of the entire educational system—and much of this work has already been done by the governors and other broad education thinkers—identify po-

tential additions or modifications in the elements of the total system that will lead to improvements in learning—and I mentioned before as one aspect of that the Children's Investment Trust—rethink policy information needs to focus on indicators of progress toward quality. We must generate quality control measurements that focus on the system and take a long view rather than focusing on single data points such as the test results for any given year.

We feel strongly that business as usual won't do; but we also feel strongly that beginning a journey to quality education for all cannot be successful if we begin with an incomplete understanding of how to achieve that quality.

I thank you for the opportunity to discuss my views with you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Clausen follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. CLAUSEN

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, my name is Erling Clausen. I am superintendent of schools in Berkeley Heights, NJ and am currently president of the American Association of School Administrators, AASA.

I am here today representing AASA, which is the professional organization of nearly 19,000 local school superintendents and other education executives.

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to testify on the development of a national report card as proposed in S. 2034. My comments will cover the views of AASA regarding S. 2034 and my experience in New Jersey, where we had a report card for one year.

AASA feels that S. 2034 is flawed in that; its underlying assumption about how to achieve quality is wrong, the information generated will not lead to increased achievement, it is redundant, and it creates a self perpetuating cabinet level body that duplicates the mission of the Secretary of Education.

First, the assumption implicit in S. 2034 that improved assessment and monitoring will lead to quality is simply incorrect. To make an analogy with business. Education assessments and monitoring as envisioned by S. 2034 are like inspections of parts in an auto plant that has clear production goals. Inspections can identify faulty parts but the cost of production is already incurred, rework is costly, and productivity drops as completed parts are thrown out. On the other hand, as the Japanese have shown, designing or engineering quality into the parts reduces waste, rework and the cost of inspection, and increases productivity.

For the last 40 years one management consultant has been advising the Japanese how to produce quality products. That man is an American, W. Edwards Deming, who had his greatest effect thousands of miles away in Japan. Deming's impact on Japan is so profound that the national prize to the industry exemplifying quality is called the Deming Prize.

What magical advice has Dr. Deming given the Japanese? Among his principle points for achieving quality is the advice that quality cannot be reached through inspection, it can only be designed into a product or process.

Some related advice from Dr. Deming on producing quality is that, quality can be reached by; focusing on the whole system not its subparts; establishing close relations with suppliers; promoting cooperation between workers, units, and divisions; organizing the work so workers can do work that makes them proud; eliminating merit pay, incentive pay, and awards; eliminating employee rating systems; instituting training, coaching and life long learning; and most importantly, paying close attention to the customer needs.

Perhaps we should let the advice of Dr. Deming guide us as we seek to improve education and focus on designing quality into the education system. Designing quality into the system forces us to look first at all the important factors in learning that occur before the school house doors open each day. Child well being, family well being, teacher and administrator preparation, employment practices, available resources, a safe, well maintained learning environment, a child centered curriculum, and community involvement are among those important pre school day factors.

After examination of those elements of the education that precede schooling, must examine the processes of schooling. Examination of schooling processes would track the education reform movement. Then we must examine the connections of schools

with post secondary education and the world of work to determine how those processes can be improved.

Our second criticism of S. 2034 is that the information generated about the education system is so focused on one element of the total system, schooling, that the information will incorrectly put the total responsibility for results on teachers and administrators. It is illogical to blame or praise teachers and principals as the only, or even the principal causes for the performance of a system they did not create and do not control. Responsibility for outcomes must be properly assigned to the total system and responsibility for subprocesses or system elements must go to those who control the elements of the system.

For example, I am no more in control of all of the fundamental processes of children's learning than the director of public housing in Washington, DC is in control of the living conditions of all poor persons in Washington.

Although I have no control over many of the fundamental causes of student learning, I am lucky. The families who send students to Berkeley Heights are able to provide the health, nutrition and care that sends students to school ready to learn. Similarly, our property wealth allows us to afford the best teachers and administrators. We also have the funds to provide quality professional development opportunities to all our employees, and to maintain safe, attractive learning environments.

Within the limits of State law and regulations, local school board policy and our teacher contract we do have control over who we hire, our curriculum and instruction professional development, and community involvement activities, so I take pride in those activities. But the contemplated report card would praise or blame only the employees of the Berkeley Heights school district for the outcomes of education. And that is a fundamental error.

Our third criticism of S. 2034 is that it is redundant. The President and the Governors have established goals, and according to the Gallup poll those goals are widely acceptable. Governor Roy Romer of Colorado is heading a governors task force on strategies to achieve the goals, the U.S. Department of Education is prepared to monitor progress, and educators have committed to the goals. Additionally, the FY91 House Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriation bill has \$10 million in it for the Department of Education to track progress on the goals. AASA does not feel that a National Council on Education Goals could contribute anything to the goals or the strategies for attainment at this point.

Most States have adopted the goals or variations on the goals, and goals specific to urban education based on the governors' goals are being refined. Because everything is on track with the goals it seems to AASA that the tasks of the proposed Council are already done or under way through existing structures.

Our final criticism of S. 2034 is that it creates a self-perpetuating body with status equal to a cabinet member and a governor status for its chair. Most educators felt that establishing a Department of Education with a Secretary of Education would accomplish the tasks outlined for the National Education Council. Why would there be a need for a Council with a Chair equal in stature with the Secretary and equal to the governor who is Chair of the National Governors Association? The Governors and the Secretary of Education have given a great deal of leadership on development of the goals and the implementation strategies. In the absence of a failure on the part of the Secretary or the NGA, the proposed council is unneeded.

We are suspicious of governmental bodies that once created, get to elect their own membership. In our system of government, whether it is the superintendent of schools being responsible to the school board or the Secretary of Education being responsible to the President, public servants with few exceptions are immediately accountable to elected officials.

Finally, some thoughts on report cards. Appended to my testimony is an article from our professional publication the *School Administrator* on use of report cards by States. According to the article, by Jay Goldman of the AASA staff, about two dozen States issue public reports on student performance, the context of schooling and the process of schooling. California, Delaware, Illinois and New Jersey have issued formal "report cards." The experience in those States is mixed, in that the reports seem to be used more by realtors than parents. The California, New Jersey, Delaware and Illinois report cards rely on average test scores for each school.

New Jersey dropped its report card because of a budget crunch, and it is unclear whether or not the report card will be restored.

The California, Delaware, Illinois and New Jersey report cards, report contextual variables and process indicators to put test scores in some context and report on fundamental processes on schooling. The attempt to explain the context of schooling and the fundamental process of schooling are sometimes lost when report cards are picked by the mass media and newspapers such as the *Chicago Tribune* or the

Philadelphia Inquirer print test scores in descending order for all schools in their circulation area.

I have experienced a State report card. The three schools in Berkeley Heights scored about as high as it was possible to score on the New Jersey State test and thus received an "excellent card." It may help that the students in Berkeley Heights come nearly entirely from middle, upper middle and upper class homes where high levels of education are the norm. Also, nearly all of our students all receive fine medical care, are well nourished and have warm, safe homes.

Rather than a report card we urge you to resurrect the education summit. The summit which gives Congress a major role passed in 1985, and already has an appropriation. However, Congressional leadership and the President did not make the appointments necessary to hold the conference. We suggest that the education summit conference be convened with the following charges:

- Conduct a fundamental analysis of the entire educational system. Much of the work has been done by the Governors and other broad education thinkers.

- Identify potential additions or modifications in the elements of the total system, that will lead to improvements in learning. One such change I suggest is adoption of the Children's Investment Trust, as proposed by Jule Sugerman, the first director of Head Start.

- Rethink policy information needs to focus on indicators of progress toward quality. We must generate quality control measurements that focus on the system and take a long view rather than focusing on single data points such as test results for any given year.

Let's redesign the whole system, from the family to the employer, and then monitor progress on the fundamental elements, rather than monitor goals without regard modifying the fundamental system of education.

We strongly feel that business as usual won't do. But we also strongly feel that beginning a journey to quality education for all cannot be successful if we begin with an incomplete understanding of how to achieve quality.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss our views with you.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you very much, Dr. Clausen.

Let me just change the format a little bit here. If Mr. Preston Kronkosky, who is the director of Southwest Education Development Labor, would come up and plan to participate after the other two witnesses as part of this same panel, I think that would be good.

Dr. LeMahieu is not going to be with us today, so we'll do it all in one panel.

Ms. Fricke, we're glad to have you here. Go right ahead.

Ms. FRICKE. Thank you, Senator Bingaman, Senator Kerrey. I am very honored to be here.

I am Martha Fricke, president of the National School Boards Association and member of the Ashland/Greenwood, NE School Board.

NSBA appreciates this opportunity to testify on S. 2034, "The National Education Report Act of 1990". We believe that a well-conceived report card program that focuses the Nation on attaining key goals in education can produce positive results.

Specifically, national indicators which make up the report card can help local educators evaluate their schools, identify national trends in education and build the necessary consensus for action at the local, State and Federal levels.

In supporting a national report card, a comment could be made about one possible ingredient; this comment also should be made. Student testing. NSBA can support testing which focuses on general thinking skills and core knowledge areas. Conversely, we vigorously oppose specific content-oriented testing for the reasons set forth in pages 8 and 9 of our statement, including the harmful

impact of stifling diversity and innovation and the potential for establishing a national curriculum.

We should also point out that a national report card alone will not produce local or nationwide success. Whether it paves the way for meaningful improvement will depend on a number of factors, which I would like to briefly outline.

First, clear and consistent goals must be established. Educators and the public are being given a number of conflicting messages and expectations such as: (1) More national testing, but greater local flexibility; (2) higher academic standards, but lower dropout rates; and (3) more college-bound students, but more workplace preparation for entry-level employment.

Although these messages are not totally inconsistent, achieving each of them means some dilution of focus or moving in different directions. Schools cannot be all things to all people. A report card should be clear in terms of the priorities it wishes to measure and how it will accommodate or discount efforts by schools to address competing goals.

Second, great care must be taken in determining who decides the indicators and which process is utilized. NSBA believes that the oversight council established by the bill should be composed of a balanced number of political leaders, preeminent educators, business leaders, school board members and others who can connect the local and national course of education with the cultural and economic requirements of 21st century America.

It is only after consideration of that larger connection that we will begin to understand our true national objectives in education from which data, assessment and strategic recommendations will then flow.

S. 2034 as drafted confines membership to the education community. As such, we are concerned that the prominent role which can be played by a report card program, including its ability to involve leaders from all sectors, will not be realized.

Further, we believe that a panel comprised only of educators implies that success or at least what must be evaluated for success in education is limited to the view of a single, albeit important, segment.

Rather, we urge that the composition of the board be broadened to reflect the responsibility for educating many segments of society. Again, we believe the basic questions and solutions require a broader range of council members.

Third, the indicators selected must focus on improved decision-making. Unless a report card includes information about resources available to schools, social causes for variances, nonschool-based factors, alternative programs and solutions, the report will be of limited practical value and be resisted or downplayed at the local level. Further, neither the national goals adopted by the governors nor the report card system will succeed in improving education if the approach taken implies that school systems can do the job alone.

There is a critical role to be played by other social service agencies to deliver much needed nutrition and health care to needy students—parents, the business community, as well as State and Federal Government. The report card system must recognize their re-

spective roles and account for the success and progress of their contributions.

In emphasizing the inclusion of information that truly helps decisionmaking, NSBA would not support a report card which simply results in more data collection, more top-down mandates, or blame on educators.

Fourth, indicators should include data on resources which influence educational outcomes. Generally, S. 2034 takes a fairly comprehensive approach to identifying such key resource indicators as finances and teacher salaries, but given the focus on improved decisionmaking, the list of resource indicators should be expanded to include the following: Availability of instructional resources, including technology; the ability of school systems to attract talented teachers, including data demonstrating the effectiveness of schools of education; progress made by social service agencies to help schoolchildren in such areas as health, nutrition and family counseling; and progress made by the business community to contribute resources, design part-time jobs to encourage school retention, and to enable and encourage employees to spend time assisting in the education of their children.

Fifth, results must be reported in a manner which is easily understood and usable. For good decisions to be made, a general report card system must be easy to interpret by the general public, the press and the policymakers.

For example, most local school boards would not support a testing program that merely reported point scores. That type of system, especially if coupled with rewards and punishments, simply emphasizes teaching to the test as well as negative comparisons. Classrooms need a freer approach to curriculum, including the freedom to innovate.

In presenting test scores, a better approach would include some statement to the public as to levels of skill mastery within point ranges. It might be helpful also to classify and report on school performance in ranges of resources available, the economic level of the community and other factors generally relevant to student performance.

Sixth, the program should be national and voluntary. NSBA supports a national—not Federal—report card. The assessment process should be governed by national leaders as reflected in our suggestions for the composition of the national council, and it should be funded from a variety of sources of which the Federal Government would be but one. Further, participation by local school districts and States in the national report card program should not be federally mandated or coerced as a condition for receiving Federal funds.

Seventh, the report card should include recommendations especially on national and Federal action to be taken. Although S. 2034 can make a valuable contribution in terms of the data it will report, it falls short of charging the council with the responsibility of recommending policy or any action to be taken. The program should be more results-oriented. For example, recommendations for improvement by Federal, State and local policymakers and other education stakeholders should be included as part of the reporting

system. Also, recommendations can be made for individual States where justified by comparative data.

The point is the data and the analytical role being contemplated will be helpful to policymakers, but recommendations and ideas are needed as well. A report card system that is no more than a catalog of numbers without any connection to policy recommendations will not be as useful to earnest policymakers.

Eighth, the national report card and the activities of the council should be coordinated with other national efforts. Regardless of whether S. 2034 contemplates a primarily technical informational function or one that would assume policy leadership in education, the legislation should require coordination with other groups including the governors' panel on national goals. In this regard, it is obvious that the advancement of education will not occur if the national efforts of various groups undermine each other, or send mixed messages to educators and the general public.

Since a voluntary and effective national report card requires support by the States, the committee may wish to explore an approach which makes the S. 2034 program a resource for the national goals panel.

NSBA supports the articulation of both S. 2034 and the national goals panel with a national summit conference on education, P.L. 98-524. Among other functions, such a conference, perhaps on a quadrennial basis, can bring broad-based oversight by political leaders, educators and other key parties to the general direction of education. The summit could provide valuable advice and evaluation for the report card program as well as to the governors' panel on goals.

In conclusion, NSBA believes an important contribution can be made by a national report card system. A well-conceived report card can be a useful tool for local educators as well as for policymakers at all levels to act on national trends in education. In order for that contribution to be realized, careful consideration needs to be given to such basic questions as defining our national education objectives, determining who makes these decisions, presenting a report card in a manner that is usable to policymakers, and ensuring that the report card process is credible among all education stakeholders, and coordinating the report card with other national assessment efforts, especially in terms of necessary consistency in the policy messages which they are giving.

By contrast, NSBA would oppose an assessment effort which is primarily a vehicle to nationalize curriculum or which only involves more data collection or ways to find fault with American education. NSBA wants tools for results, including data to compare causes, resources and program options. If that focus, along with our other recommendations, are followed, NSBA can support S. 2034.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Fricke follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARTHA C. FRICKE

I am Martha Fricke, president of the National School Boards Association and a member of the Ashland-Greenwood, Nebraska School Board. I am pleased to have this opportunity to testify before the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and

the Humanities on behalf of the 97,000 local school board members across the country who set policy for the education of our school children.

NSBA is the only major education organization representing the locally elected and appointed school board members across the nation. Currently marking its fiftieth year of service, NSBA is a federation of State school board associations with direct local school board affiliates, constituted to strengthen local lay control of education and to work for improving public education. Nationwide, local school board members are politically accountable to their constituents for the prudent operation and fiscal management of the local school districts they serve. As government officials, school board members are uniquely positioned to judge federal legislative programs purely from the standpoint of public education, without consideration to their personal or professional interests.

NSBA appreciates this opportunity to testify on S. 2034—the National Education Report Card Act of 1990. We believe that a well-conceived report card program that focuses the nation on attaining key goals in education can lead to significant results in our schools and of great benefit to our nation as it confronts the challenges of the 21st century. Accordingly, NSBA supports the efforts of the subcommittee to consider this legislation and we ask that you give serious attention to our concerns and recommendations.

NSBA's support for a well-designed national report card program is dependent on the following beliefs and policy recommendations concerning national assessment of education:

A. A strengthened national system of reporting educational progress can well serve the national interest, including improving educational performance, only if national education goals are clear and consistent.

B. Measures of successful goal achievement must include resources and recommendations as well as results, and be selected by a broad spectrum of leaders knowledgeable about the direction and requirements of American society in the 21st century.

C. A national assessment should only include national testing if it explicitly avoids stifling diversity and innovation through a national curriculum, focuses on general thinking skills and a limited core subject matter, and employs a reporting format that is fair and easily understood.

D. A national assessment should follow a single coordinated strategy that links the National Report Card concept of S. 2034 with other approaches such as the efforts of the President's and governors' panel on national goals and the already enacted National Summit Conference on Education (P.L. 98-524).

E. To gain respect and legitimacy, a national report card program cannot be solely controlled and funded by the Federal Government or rely on mandates or the threat of withholding federal funds as a means for securing the participation of States and local school districts.

By way of introduction, these policy issues should be considered within the context of what S. 2034 is intended to be. For example, if the bill is primarily intended to establish a data collection center for policy makers, the rationale for limited responsibility by the oversight council to make policy recommendations on data, as well as the non-political composition of the Council itself would be clearer. If on the other hand, S. 2034 is not intended to be so much a service center but the ultimate word from the Federal Government on national and federal issues and trends in education, we would question the limited and low-key approach taken by the bill.

With that overarching question of legislative intent in mind, I would like to discuss, in general terms, the five policy recommendations which we have set out.

A. *A strengthened national system of reporting educational progress can well serve the national interest, including improving educational performance, only if national education goals are clear and consistent.*

1. *Assessment and quality education for all*

Clearly, the establishment of a system of national indicators would be a very useful tool for local educators and communities to evaluate the schools. National comparisons are increasingly important at the local level given our national culture, the mobility of our people, and the nature of the American workplace. Children who are being educated in the most remote rural areas, the most troubled big cities, or in just average school districts should have a quality of education that will enable them to succeed not only in their own community—but anywhere in the nation. While a national report card alone will not by itself produce local success, it does provide a basis for local accountability and action.

Moreover, the preparation of today's students for the challenges of the 21st century will require national attention. A national reporting system can be a very powerful and galvanizing call to action for parents, the business community, State and

federal political leaders, local school boards, as well as professional educators. That is, beyond identifying local needs, a national report can be a critical asset in identifying national trends in education, including cultural and workplace needs across the nation, and building a consensus for any necessary action at the State and federal levels.

2. Importance of clear and consistent goals.

As indicated earlier, NSBA can support an assessment that includes national testing of thinking skills and a limited core of knowledge. Certainly a priority should be given on establishing objectives which support the national education goals. One concern that we do have is that the assessment not be constructed to suggest that schools can be all things for all students. Further, the educational objectives to be measured may conflict with one another. For example, some critics argue that the academic standards at high schools and the entry standards at colleges are not high enough. In moving toward the goal of raising academic standards, we are also challenged to meet the somewhat conflicting goal of reducing school drop-out rates. And, in accomplishing both objectives, we must do so without tracking students.

Likewise, the governors point out that currently schools place primary value on academically preparing the 30 percent of students who go to college. The governors argue that neither these students, or more importantly, the other 70 percent are adequately educated for the world of work. Again, seeking to increase the number of college-bound students while emphasizing workplace competencies can create some inconsistencies of objectives and expectations for our students. Further, in terms of process we may be at once moving toward more standardization of curriculum on national tests (including accountability of performance) while directing ore that efforts be taken toward school-based management, flexibility, and curriculum innovation. Hence, in broad terms schools are being challenged by several missions—not always consistent with each other.

From a practical standpoint, assessments should be aimed at clear results. The opportunity for mixed or inconsistent messages should be kept at a minimum and understood in devising a national report card.

Hence, if properly designed, a national system of reporting will serve the general national interest, including education. Local school boards recognize that such a system may result in greater standardization of learning. Nevertheless, we are prepared to support some movement toward national standards—if, in fact, the program is constructed to produce results, not just more data, mandates, or blame on educators.

B. Measuring Success—Who should decide?

1. Indicators must include a focus on results.

The ultimate success of a national report card system will, of course, depend on what is measured. It will also depend on whether the data reported is in a form which can lead to action by policy makers and the general public.

In terms of student performance most school districts and school sites already have a fairly good idea as to how well they are doing. Although not perfect measures, SRA, CAT, and SAT exams, college admissions, and the opinions of local employers do provide the schools with substantial information. For many low-achieving schools, the utility of a report card, is not in finding yet other ways to measure or compare the low performance of their students. For these schools, a more useful report card would provide indicators that would also allow them to compare causes, program alternatives, and resources.

The point is, short of establishing a national curriculum, school boards can support nationally improved assessments for thinking skills, core information, and other general competencies. However, unless the report card provides data which is aimed at results, including resources and solutions, the report (including student assessments) will be of limited practical value—and be resisted or down-played at the local level.

2. A Report card should include: (1) Goals identified by the President and governors; and (2) indicators of progress by various sectors having responsibility for education.

Rather than presenting a full list of goals and indicators, suffice it to say that NSBA fully supports the six goals identified by the President and the nation's governors. Certainly other goals can be established and major specific needs—like urban education needs—should be identified and addressed.

It should be underscored that goals to improve education, and in turn the function of the report card system, will not succeed if the approach taken implies that school systems can do the job alone. There is a critical role to be played by other social service agencies (in such areas as nutrition and health), parents, the business community, as well as State and Federal Governments. The report card system

must recognize their respective roles, and measure the success and progress of their annual contribution.

3. Who decides indicators is a central question.

We would like to comment briefly on "who" determines the indicators and the process that is utilized. National indicators, especially student testing, can have a tremendous influence over our nation's educational objectives, the content of classroom curriculum, and the general direction taken in the education of 40 million school children.

The persons making those decisions should be professionally and politically credible—and rely on a broad cross section of advisors. The precise composition of the oversight Council and the advisors they have, in part, is dependent on the question we presented at the outset as to the intent of S. 2034. However, we can offer a few comments.

The National Governors' Association (NGA) would place oversight under a panel of broadly-based political leaders (i.e., governors, members of Congress, and members of the Administration). Although the NGA panel would be assisted by technical experts in assessment, we believe that leaving decision making in a purely political arena understates the significance of the task—or the likely resistance from local educators to accept its work.

By contrast, S. 2034 would place esteemed educators on its oversight Council but is devoid of any political leaders. We believe a panel comprised solely of educators would suffer from a different credibility problem by being viewed as too insulated and reflective of the existing order. The provision in section 4 allowing existing panel members to self-select persons to fill vacancies could seriously isolate the panel. Moreover, the composition of the Council under S. 2034 reinforces the notion that the challenges to education can be, and should be, met and evaluated by educators alone. Likewise, it assumes that success will occur solely on the basis of the activities and decisions that take place within the four corners of the nation's school systems.

NSBA recommends a larger panel comprised of political leaders (federal, State, and local), educators, persons broadly knowledgeable about the culture and diversity of our nation, and members of the business community. We also recommend stronger guidance as to the breadth of advice which the Council (and its data collectors) should receive—and the kinds of persons and organizations that should be consulted.

NSBA believes that the main purpose of the Council should be to ensure that its consideration of national goals, as well as its data, indicators, and recommendations are connected to fulfilling the major purposes of American education in the 21st century. Because of the importance of the panel, a mechanism should be in place through which it has the means and responsibility to have its own direction and performance evaluated. We will be making recommendations on that point later in our testimony.

C. Measuring and reporting education achievement.

1. Results must be reported in a manner which is easily understood and usable.

Whatever reporting system is utilized, it should be subject to easy interpretation by the general public, the press, and policy makers. For example, most local school boards would not support a testing program that merely reported point scores. That type of system, especially if coupled with rewards and punishments, simply emphasizes teaching to the test, as well as meaningless and negative comparisons. Classrooms need a freer approach to curriculum, including the freedom to innovate. In presenting test scores, a better approach would include some statement to the public as to levels of skill mastery within point ranges. It might be helpful also to classify and report on school performance in ranges of resources available, economic level of the community, and other factors generally relevant to student performance.

2. Establish a balanced approach to student testing.

Although the report card which is developed will cover a full range of data, probably no area will be as sensitive, visible, or subject to misunderstanding as student testing. The more specific and content-oriented the test is, the more sensitive it will be and the more difficult it will be to obtain State approval, for the following reasons:

- A specific content-oriented test (especially one that is highly visible) can result in establishing a national curriculum in subject areas. Especially if rewards and punishments are assigned to test performance, teachers will be especially under pressure to teach to the test. We believe that level of rigidity in curriculum would be educationally unsound and would undermine the ability of school districts to attract and retain the most qualified teachers.

- Site-based management and other reforms such as merging grade levels, providing individualized programming, and utilizing new instructional methods all emphasize flexibility, risk-taking, and innovation. Efforts to achieve these school site reforms cannot succeed, if, at the same time, accountability is tied primarily to performance on a specific curriculum defined by a national test.
- As subject matter expands in science and technology, and given the obvious debate over what should be taught in courses such as history and literature, the validity of a national assessment based on specific curriculum will be under continuous challenge. Further, in a nation where culture and employment opportunities are as diverse as the United States, an identical curriculum for all students would not serve the national interest.
- As States adopt their own assessments, and as other skills are tested (e.g., workplace competencies), school officials may simply find themselves being held accountable to specific course requirements on too many fronts, by too many masters, to be fully effective.

Rather, the approach to national testing should emphasize mastery over skill areas—with only limited emphasis on testing specific information in any curriculum area.

3. *International comparisons.*

S. 2034 authorizes the Council to compare U.S. student performance with other nations. While such comparisons are valuable, careful consideration should be given to the importance of such data. If the United States wants to compare test scores with other nations, it should also compare various factors, such as resources, that either justify differences or remove excuses.

D. *Coordinating a National Assessment.*

s. 2034 is laudably more specific in its charge than NGA was in establishing the national goals panel. By including such areas as school finance and parental involvement, the report card envisioned would address resources—which are so vital to improvement and educational policy-makers. However, as set forth in our recommendations section, there are a variety of other factors that must be included in a national effort. Again, we wish to emphasize that the task is far too complicated to be viewed purely as requiring school-based solutions. A truly national report card should recognize all the sectors that influence education—and through public reporting, hold those sectors accountable, along with the school systems.

Depending somewhat on our initial question regarding the intended policy status of S. 2034, we believe that the program can be fully compatible with the governors' goals panel and the National Summit Conference authorized several years ago. Clearly, the data collection and recommendations from the report card can flow into the governors' panel on national goals—which would be an important step toward implementing results. Further, the format of the National Summit Conference provides a broad-based and representative forum of political leaders and educators for both the governors' goals panel and National Report Card program to evaluate their progress, take future guidance, and develop consensus. We believe there would be great value to a National Summit Conference being convened quadrennially to include a broad oversight of assessment in its agenda.

E. *NSBA's Specific Recommendation for S. 2034*

1. The program should be national and voluntary.

NSBA's support for a report card runs to an assessment which is national—not federal in character. In this regard the assessment process should be governed by national leaders, including some federal policy-makers. Likewise, the program should be funded from a variety of sources, of which the Federal Government would be one. Because education is primarily a local and State function, participation in the national assessment should not be federally mandated or coerced as a condition for receiving federal funds for programs such as Chapter 1.

2. Indicators should include data on resources which influence educational outcomes.

Generally, S. 2034 takes a fairly comprehensive, but cautious approach to national reporting. In addition to building a reporting system around national goals, it identifies a number of key resource indicators, such as finances and teacher salaries that should be reported. NSBA believes that list of resource indicators should be expanded to include the following:

- availability of instructional resources, including technology;
- the ability of school systems to attract talented teachers—including data demonstrating the effectiveness of schools of education
- progress made by social service agencies to help school children in such areas as health nutrition, family counseling, etc.;

- progress made by the business community to contribute resources, design part-time jobs to encourage school retention, and to enable (and encourage) employees to spend time assisting in the education of their children.

3. The report card should include recommendations—especially on national and federal action to be taken.

S. 2034 can make a valuable contribution in terms of the data it will report, the analysis it will provide, and the public attention it will attract. However, the bill falls short of charging the Council with the responsibility of recommending policy or any action to be taken based on the data it reports. We recommend that the program be more results-oriented. For example, beyond reporting national trends, suggestions for federal, State, and local policy-makers and for other stakeholders in American education should be included within the function of the reporting system. We would suggest also that recommendations to individual States be included—where justified by comparative data.

In essence, the interest in American education has major national and federal dimensions. The data and analytical role being contemplated will be helpful in establishing policy on these fronts, but recommendations and ideas are needed as well.

4. The composition of the Council should ensure that the report card system is credible and visible.

NSBA believes that the Council should be composed of a balanced number of political leaders, preeminent educators, business leaders, school board members and others who can connect the direction of education, including the federal and national dimensions, with the cultural and economic world of 21st century America. It is only after consideration of that larger connection that a clearer picture will emerge as to what our true national objectives in education are—from which any data, assessment, and strategic recommendations will then flow.

S. 2034, as drafted, confines membership to the education community. As such, we are concerned that the prominent role which can be played by a report card program, including its ability to involve leaders from all sectors, will not be realized.

5. Any assessment of student achievement should focus on thinking skills and basic knowledge—and not focus on testing specific curriculum.

As indicated earlier, the focus of our national learning coupled with needs of local educators justify both a national comparison of student achievement and a common base of skills and knowledge.

At the same time we are vigorously opposed to a testing program which effectively creates a national curriculum—thereby stifling diversity and innovation in student learning. S. 2034 should be very specific in prohibiting that result. Further, the bill should be clear that whatever student assessment process is utilized that: (a) the amount of class time; and (b) the cost of administration be reported and the funding source identified.

6. The national report card and the activities of Council should be coordinated with other national efforts.

Regardless of whether S. 2034 contemplates a primarily technical/informational function or one that would assume policy leadership in education, the legislation should require coordination with other activities—including the governors' panel on national goals. In this regard, it is obvious that the advancement of education will not occur if national efforts undermine each other, or send mixed messages to educators and the general public.

NSBA fully supports a National Summit Conference on Education (P.L. 98-524). Among other resources such a conference is necessary to bring broad-based concerns among political leaders and educators to the steps which needs to be taken at all levels of government. As detailed in section D of our statement, the report card system and the Council should be especially coordinated with the summit—including any assessment which may be implemented as a result of provisions contained in Title IX of H.R. 5115.

In conclusion, NSBA believes an important contribution can be made by a national report card system. A well-conceived report card can be a useful tool for local educators, as well as for policy-makers at all levels to act on national trends in education. In order for that contribution to be realized, careful consideration needs to be given to such basic questions as: (1) To defining our national education objectives; (2) determining who makes those decisions, presenting a report card in a manner that is usable by policy-makers; (3) ensuring that the report card process is credible among all education stakeholders; and (4) coordinating the report card with other national assessment efforts—especially in terms of necessary consistency in the policy messages which they are giving.

By contrast NSBA would oppose an assessment effort, which is primarily a vehicle to nationalize curriculum or which only involves more data collection or ways to

find fault with American education. NSBA wants tools for results, including data to compare, causes, resources, and program options. If that focus, along with our other recommendations, are followed NSBA would support S. 2034.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you very much, Ms. Fricke.

Dr. CLAUSEN. Senator, excuse me.

Senator BINGAMAN. Yes, Dr. Clausen.

Dr. CLAUSEN. I wonder if I might be excused, Senator Bingaman. I have an appointment at the White House at 10:30.

Senator BINGAMAN. We don't want to interfere with any appointments at the White Houses, so you are excused. Senator Kerrey had a question of you first.

Dr. CLAUSEN. Yes.

Senator KERREY. I just want to know, Dr. Clausen, if you and Martha Fricke are both referencing the same thing. You referenced P.L. 98-524; is that the legislation that Pat Williams passed that provides—

Dr. CLAUSEN. Yes. That may be because we are both from Nebraska, we have a lot in common.

Senator KERREY. I guess the difficult part for me in addition to just getting the question out is as I face taxpayers, and you know, they do want results. They look at the latest SAT scores, and they look at all the evaluations, and they hear when NAEP puts out its results, or some of the more recent statements by Secretary Cavazos. The essential conclusion that Secretary Cavazos has reached is this: We spent more money, and we didn't get anything for it. That is the message. And by the way, it is shared by a large number of citizens. Martha knows we got a constitutional amendment to impose a 2 percent lid in the State of Nebraska, and the origin of that is taxpayer dissatisfaction. They are just angry. They are spending money and they say "We are not getting anything."

The idea here is to try to give us a tool not only to measure but to engage the public in looking at the problem so they don't see it as quite as simple. It is not just a test but a means to look. In fact, I said I support both programs, but I am not pleased with the manner—and as long as you're going to the White House, you can deliver this message if you are going to talk to them about education—I am not pleased with the manner in which they developed the summit because they almost entirely cut Congress out of it—a big mistake—not just because it makes us angry, but because there are an awful lot of us, as I said at the beginning, who campaigned because we want to make education better. And I listened to the admittedly political—I understand the nature of politics—speeches given by the Executive Branch saying, "We didn't cause this budget deficit; Congress spends the money." But when it comes time to try to get a fair appropriation for education, they have no difficulty coming to us and saying, "Gee, we really need your help to get this thing done."

It seems to me that you need a basis not only to test and to get this report card that he talked about so that it doesn't just gather dust, but to engage these taxpayers in such a way that they begin to see that this problem isn't just one of testing, that there are lots of other things that have to be done, but most importantly that the effort is going to be worthwhile and that there will be results.

I am just curious, and I understand you've got a pretty good school system in Berkeley Heights, and I was wondering what you think.

Dr. CLAUSEN. I would say that since we are talking about a report card and we are talking about comparisons nationally, my personal opinion is that it has very little validity as far as improving instruction. It did not really improve instruction in New Jersey. The good districts continue to be good districts. The districts who are having difficulty because of social and other problems continue to score low. And what happened as a result was all the things you are talking about were simply magnified because you had results coming out of Newark, for instance, which everybody would have expected, but now they have a number, and so the number just exacerbates the whole situation. It did nothing, in my opinion, to improve education.

I think the only way you improve education is at the grassroots, and make it important, make people think it is important which, in my opinion, we haven't done in spite of all the talk. If we make it important, we put some money into the pot so that we know we are supporting education both federally and at the State level—and we have done that in New Jersey; we have a governor who has bit the bullet and has really gotten the money that we need—he is not very well-liked at this moment, but he made the tough decisions. And until we reach that point, and until we have everyone working together in a collaborative effort and not pointing at SATs or pointing at scores and saying you did this and you did that, it is a very small part. You are talking about Berkeley Heights. In Berkeley Heights we are fortunate. We have outstanding teachers, we have good support, but we measure internally, which is what I think is where it counts. We have district criterion reference tests in every subject area. We test what we teach. And when we find a place that needs to be improved, we improve it. And I think that has to be done at the local level. I don't know that you can do it at a national, or State level.

Senator BINGAMAN. Why don't we excuse you, Dr. Clausen, and call on Ms. Waterman at this point and then Dr. Kronkosky, and then we'll have a round of questions.

Go ahead, Ms. Waterman.

Ms. WATERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you for being here.

Ms. WATERMAN. It is my privilege.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Kerrey, I am Millie Waterman, consultant for the National PTA and a former vice president of legislative activity for the National PTA that has nearly 7 million members today.

The National PTA joins Senator Bingaman and other cosponsors of S. 2034 in their concern about educational accountability and school improvement. But we are cognizant about the use, the misuse and the abuse of evaluation data and policies which do not provide accurate or meaningful information about student performance.

How many more evaluation plans must be entertained before we do something about assuring that every child has a quality education?

Congress did not ask the Pentagon for a national report card before the Nation responded to the Iraqi threat. The Congress spotted the threat, and they did something about it immediately. People, supplies, technical assistance, money, and a plan were deployed in record time.

It is almost a decade now, gentlemen, since the National Commission on Excellence in Education declared a "nation at risk". Now is the time to declare war on the schools that need improvement—not a plan to assess the problems even more. Mr. Bingaman, I guarantee you that the National PTA will join you in this war if you would wage it.

It is a fact that at the local and State levels the most meaningful evaluation related to school improvement will occur. Today you have called us together to give you honest input on our concerns on S. 2034. The National PTA does have some concerns.

First, agencies already exist that could evaluate the national goals and assume many of the responsibilities.

Second, it appears that the national council on educational goals will be charged with assessment responsibilities far in excess of analyzing the progress of the goals.

Third, without appropriate congressional oversight, the power of the council over local school district curriculum and decisionmaking is considerable. Top-down goals and top-down assessment is a recipe for political manipulation rather than educational success.

Fourth, school districts may be faced with two sets of national goals—one set developed by the President and the governors, evaluated by their panel and another set developed by the national council via the national report card.

Fifth, any assessment panel must assure maximum local involvement. Research suggests that the most sustaining school improvement does take place at the building level by those closest to the educational process.

We know, sir, what makes good schools. We have had the Department of Education's Recognition Program for almost a decade. And those schools that have been recognized have innovative programs, teachers that are caring, competent and rewarded, school climate, attendance records, sound financial base, and so it goes.

There is indeed a critical need for more information about the State of public education. We believe that more is required than just reading about our schools. We need more data on the condition of children. America needs to be reminded daily about how it treats its young people, which segments of its youth population need special help, and whether we as a Nation, including the Federal Government, are assuring the basic services for every child, for all of these impinge on teaching and learning and have a profound impact on student performance.

What we don't need more of, however, is standardized tests. These tests are not helpful in educational diagnosis or policymaking, and they are inaccurate indicators of child performance.

The current overemphasis on testing sabotages the very educational reform movement. It is not compatible instrumentation for measuring goals. Parents are bombarded with trying to understand the meaning of a variety of tests administered to our children during the course of a school year, including IQ tests, achievement

tests, norm referenced tests, criterion referenced tests, State competency tests, and the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The National PTA has even published a booklet on the testing maze, trying to help parents understand what the testing is about, and a brochure so they can better understand the testing process.

The National PTA believes the call for a national report card measuring the goals seems premature and that Congress is moving from step A to step C without much discussion about step B—the implementation of the goals.

It seems to us impossible to evaluate goals until it is certain that the goals to be measured are the ones accepted by the American people. Pilot programs are what goal-oriented districts do to assure that programs meet parent and community and staff expectations before they are really implemented across a district.

While the National PTA submitted recommendations to the President and the governors during the goal-setting process, the Charlottesville Summit did not include a single local PTA or local community member.

Today there is much rhetoric about how important parents are in the education of their children. The National PTA believes that. But it is perplexing to us that the goals did not include a single mention of parental involvement. How can this be? How can those who supply the children and pay the bills not be a part of a process?

The goals are also silent on funding, equal educational opportunity, equity, and the role of the Federal Government.

In 1984, the National PTA supported the passage of P.L. 98-524, the National Summit Bill. This law provided appropriations and a mechanism to involve a broad cross-section of the Nation in a summit. The United States Department of Education, however, refused to take the leadership in organizing the summit, and with that inaction, the House initiated another summit bill, H.R. 5115, passed in July. It placed Congress in the driver's seat for calling a national summit. The National PTA supports this bill as an effort to build ownership of the national goals, and receive input about monitoring those goals and progress from a wide range of local people. This would also be an opportunity to refine and build on the existing goals.

The major reason that many parents and communities do not use the data to pursue school improvement is because the data is not usable. For instance, sir, if a State is ranked 15th in pupil-teacher ratio, 30th in high school graduation rates, 40th in SAT scores, what does that really all mean for school improvement? What must that State do to improve, and what indicators really make a difference in improving schools?

The PTA believes quality is not based on SAT scores but on the following indicators:

One, a comprehensive parent involvement program in every school.

Two, preschool opportunities for every child.

Three, a comprehensive school program and structure that recognizes the need of the whole child.

Four, a principal who is an instructional leader and teachers who are caring, competent, committed and rewarded.

Five, a testing program that is based on what is taught and provides information on how to improve the curriculum and better meet the needs of each student.

Six, resources which meet the needs of all children, not dependent on the income of the parent or the property wealth in the State.

Seven, school programs based on proven statistics.

We question the need, sir, for another costly commission that will publish annual comparisons of students and schools without a mechanism to act on the data. The Federal Government must encourage the preservation of public education, and this can only be done by adding resources and creating partnerships.

However, if the subcommittee is intent on passing a report card measure, the National PTA asks you to consider the following in a markup:

One, use the mechanism including the panel created by the National Summit Bill as proposed in H.R. 5115.

Two, as the National Summit is called to redefine, add to or redefine existing goals, part of the deliberation should include recommendations about monitoring the goals.

Three, existing resources from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement could be used to monitor, or the regional labs, and centers in other data-gathering agencies.

Four, standardized and multiple test questions should not be a source of goal monitoring instrumentation. And as we go on, we find that State participation should be voluntary, and costs of the administration, implementation and overhead should be borne, then, by the State.

Also, results of a report card should be user-friendly so that parents will be able to understand and use to recognize schools of excellence or schools that require improvement.

New instrumentation and assessment methods should be developed on a trial basis only.

And above all, every effort should be made to assure maximum local participation and involvement. That will make a difference.

The National PTA believes that tests should be used to improve education. We are opposed to federally-mandated tests.

Thank you very much for allowing our input.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Waterman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MS. WATERMAN

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Senate Subcommittee on Education, I am Millie Waterman, board member of the 6.8 million member National PTA. The National PTA is an organization devoted to the education, health, safety, protection and care of America's 64 million children, and believes that the involvement of parents in partnership with educators and the community is critical in maintaining a strong and viable educational system. Thank you for this opportunity to present National PTA views on S. 2034, the National Education Report Card Act of 1990.

The National PTA joins Senator Bingaman and the other cosponsors of S. 2034 in their concern about educational accountability and school improvement. But we are also cognizant about the use, misuse and the abuse of evaluation data and policies

which do not provide accurate or meaningful information about student performance. How many more evaluation plans must we entertain before we do something about assuring that every child has a quality education. The Congress didn't ask the Pentagon for a National Report Card before the nation responded to Iraqi threat. The White House and the Congress spotted a threat, and they did something about it. People, supplies, technical assistants, money, and a plan were deployed in record time. Some schools and children have waited almost a decade since the National Commission on Excellence in Education declared a "nation at risk," but what they get is NAEP, the National Report Card and brow-beatings. Now is the time to declare war on educational problems that need solving; not a plan to assess the problems even more. Mr. Bingaman, I guarantee you that the National PTA will join you in this war if you will wage it.

The National PTA takes no position on report cards at the State or local level, although the principles of sound evaluation and utility should still apply. It is at the local and State levels that the most meaningful evaluation related to school improvement will occur. The National PTA does, however, have some concerns about S. 2034. First, agencies already exist that could evaluate the National Goals and assume many of the responsibilities. Second, it appears that the National Council on Educational Goals will be charged with assessment responsibilities far in excess of analyzing the progress of the goals. The National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) has already demonstrated its capacity to empire-build and move beyond authority granted to it by Congress. Third, without appropriate Congressional oversight, the power of the Council over local school district curriculum and decision-making is considerable. Top down goals and top down assessment is a recipe for political manipulation, rather than education success. Fourth, school districts may be faced with two sets of national goals; one set developed by the President and the Governors and evaluated by their panel; another set developed by the National Council via the National Report Card. This cumbersome set of dual goals will confuse, rather than assist educational accountability. Fifth, any assessment panel must assure maximum local involvement. Thus far, the goal seeking process has been one of centralized decision-making when current research suggests that the most sustaining school improvement takes place at the building level by those closest to the educational process.

There is indeed a critical need for more information about the State of public education, and a mechanism for keeping the public apprised about the quality of our schools. In fact, we believe that more is required than just a reading about the schools; we need more data on the condition of children. America needs to be reminded daily about how it treats its young people, which segments of its youth population need special help, and whether we as a nation, including the Federal Government, are assuring basic services for every child. Statistics related to economic factors, home factors, social factors, public laws and policies, media and the popular culture, health and nutrition—all impinge on teaching and learning, and have a profound impact on student performance and schooling.

For these purposes, to keep parents informed and updated, the National PTA has consistently supported such agencies as the National Center for Education Statistics, the U.S. Census Bureau, the National Science Foundation, the National Center for Health Statistics and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The National PTA has also encouraged data gathering by the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families and the Senate Children's Commission in addition to data collected by many private non-profit education, business and advocacy organizations. Noting the many reports, studies, and policy recommendations, we can't claim that this has been a decade bereft of signals warning us about impending national disaster if we don't start caring about the nation's children and their education.

What we don't need more of, however, is standardized tests. These tests are not helpful in educational diagnosis or policy making, and are inaccurate indicators of child performance. The current over-emphasis on testing sabotages the educational reform movement. Reducing educational assessment to multiple choice questions and a battery of frequently unrelated tests will undermine the evaluation of the national goals rather than inform us about goal progress and school improvement.

Parents are often bombarded with trying to understand the meaning of a variety of tests administered to their children during the course of a school year including IQ tests, achievement tests, norm referenced tests, criterion referenced tests, State competency tests and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). In Milwaukee alone, a Task Force on Assessment found that some 94,000 students are administered over 480,000 standardized tests each year, or about five per year per student. This does not include the estimated 300,000 standardized basal tests also administered annually and other less formal in-class assessment. Superimpose this

with a National Report Card and the panel created by the President and the governors to measure the national goals, and I ask the members of this subcommittee to explain this mass testing confusion to parents who are trying to understand it all.

In addition, the call for a National Report Card measuring the goals seems premature. Although the National PTA supports the National Goals, the Congress is moving from step A to step C without much discussion about step B—the implementation of the goals. To begin setting up a legal infrastructure of assessment without national consensus about goal ownership and strategies for implementation could be a set-up for parents, students and public education. It seems to us impossible to evaluate goals until it is certain that the goals to be measured are the ones accepted by the American public. These are among the same people that will be called upon to implement the goals, hold educators accountable and to pay the bills. While the National PTA submitted recommendations to the President and the Governors during their goal setting process, the Charlottesville Summit did not include a single local PTA or other local community member.

In 1984, before there was discussion about the national goals, the National PTA, with many other State and local organizations, supported the passage of P.O. 98-524, the National Summit Bill. This law provided appropriations and a mechanism to involve a broad cross-section of the nation in a summit, not just 50 governors and a President, to propose action in response to the 1983 National Commission on Education Report. The U.S. Department of Education, however, refused to take the leadership in organizing the summit. That inaction spurred the House to initiate another summit bill which was attached to H.R. 5115 and passed by the House in July. The House-passed summit bill contains language which would place Congress in the driver's seat for calling a national summit. The National PTA supports this bill as an effort to build ownership of the national goals and receive input about monitoring goal progress from a wide range of local people. This would also provide an opportunity to refine and build on existing goals.

For example, as high-powered as the rhetoric often is about how important parents are in the education of their children, the goals do not include a single mention of parental involvement. How can this be? In addition, the goals are silent on funding, equal educational opportunity and the role of the Federal Government. But most importantly, who has asked the farmer or the teacher or the secretary or the single parent for their views on the educational goals? While these may be the goals of the President and the governors, we still do not know whether these are indeed the "nation's" goals. In that context, how is it possible to know what to "report" on?

Another issue deals with how data and information have an impact on either rewarding schools that have been identified as excellent or schools that may need improvement. It is incorrect to presume that States and school districts which demonstrate above average performance will be rewarded, or that there will be a rush to improve schools which are identified as low achieving—solely on the basis of data. Often, other forces predominate beyond the school improvement pressures that parents are able to apply. I can give you examples of quality schools where PTAs work collectively with the educators, where principals are instructional leaders, where teachers care, and where the schools work closely with the community, but where the schools have the resource rug pulled out from under them. Forces such as an aging population, high unemployment, large concentrations of high-risk children and/or tax caps have greater influence over school improvement than does deficit data. As a result, many PTAs are forced to fundraise in order to supplement the school budget, rather than spending their time involved in issues of accountability and improvement.

On the other hand, there are schools with low performance data that are not pressured to improve. A study of the Illinois School Report Card concluded that "there was remarkably little direct pressure on school officials from parents concerning the report card. Principals and superintendents were more likely to report a modest number of inquiries from parents in communities with better educated populations. Pressure from business leaders was almost non-existent." Illinois also reported that the two groups that most frequently used the Report Card were real estate brokers and the media. Simply reporting educational data will not by itself force change or improvement by parents or other community residents. On another level, simply reporting data to State legislators or to Congress does not necessarily get them to move either. If data were the primary catalyst, then Head Start, with a proven record of excellence, would be fully funded and the States would provide preschool opportunities to all children who require these services.

A major reason that many parents and communities do not use data to pursue school improvement is because the data is not usable. The data that is collected must make sense, the data must be accurate and must help lead the way in identify-

ing areas that need improvement. For instance, if a State is ranked 15th in pupil-teacher ratio, 30th in high school graduation rates and 40th in SAT scores, what does all of that mean for school improvement in a particular State? What must that State do to improve? What indicators make a difference in improving schools? What must the State do to become number one? Even if a State did rank first in each of the above indicators, are those the indicators that collate with school improvement and lead toward the accomplishment of the national goals?

Let's move the issue down to the local school and parent. Parents are aware of falling SAT data, declining NAEP reading and math scores and measurements comparing U.S. education unfavorably with other countries of the industrialized world. What does that data tell a parent about how to improve the instruction in their child's school? Or what to reinforce if they believe that their child's school is doing a good job—which polls tell us most parents believe. Or data may lull parents into complacency where test scores in their child's school may rank favorably when compared to other schools, but may not give any information about the school's quality.

Thus far, the information about educational reform has not concentrated on indicators of quality, but rather on quantity. Generally excellence has come to mean more or less of something. More money, more graduation requirements, fewer counselors, more math, less music and art, more homework, more tests, longer school days, sterner discipline, without an understanding about how these initiatives make a difference in the quality of services or the learning of children. The National PTA believes that quality is not based on SAT scores but on the following indicators:

1. A comprehensive parent involvement program in every school including goal setting, home-school links, shared curriculum in decision-making, parenting and program evaluation;
2. Preschool opportunities for every child no matter where their place of residence or what their parents' income;
3. A comprehensive school program and structure that recognizes the need of the whole child and provides counseling, health, and nutrition services coordinating the various community agencies;
4. A principal who is an instructional leader and teachers who are caring, competent and committed;
5. A testing program that is based on what is taught and provides information about how to improve the curriculum and better meet the needs of each student;
6. Resources which meet the needs of all children and are not dependent on the income of the parent or the property wealth in the State;
7. School programs based on proven practice, research and the on-task levels of student achievement.

The struggle for a quality education will ultimately be won or lost in the thousands of classrooms around the country. If indicators are to affect school improvement, assessment data must reflect those intangibles that are hard to measure, but more accurately reflect school quality than SAT scores or a National Report Card. The goal is not to drive more assessment measures from the national level, but for the Federal Government to provide help in empowering parents to evaluate their own schools and identify indicators of quality which will drive school improvement instead.

Examples of these measures include the IEP (independent educational plan) related to the Education for All Handicapped Act where parents are included in the instructional decision-making of their child. IEPs have rearranged the relationships between the teacher, principal and parent and have become a potent instrument in forging a closer link between the home and school. Another example is the program improvement provisions of Chapter 1 as contained in P.L. 100-297. These provisions provide for, over a period of time, collaboration between the local school officials, the parents and, if necessary, officials from the State departments of education to intervene when programs do not meet the goals established for disadvantaged children.

Last, the Federal Government contributes approximately 1 percent of its budget for assistance to elementary and secondary school programs. Federal contributions have fallen to approximately 6.5 percent of all elementary and secondary education spending. In deference to many members of the subcommittee and other Senate and House members who have supported additional help for public education, the National PTA's experiences over this decade when we have asked Congress or the White House for significant increases in Chapter 1 or Head Start, is that "education is primarily a State and local responsibility." If less than 6.5 percent of education funding comes from Congress, what right does Congress or the President have in

wanting to evaluate the other 93.5 percent of the education programs for which it has abrogated responsibility?

The National PTA questions, at the risk of being labeled anti-accountable, the value and the need for another costly commission that will publish comparisons of students and schools without a mechanism to act on this data. The Federal Government must encourage the preservation of public education and this can only be done by adding resources and creating partnerships.

However, if the subcommittee is intent on passing a National Report Card measure, the National PTA asks you to consider the following during markup:

1. Use the mechanism including the panel created by the National Summit Bill as proposed in H.R. 5115;
2. As the National Summit is called to redefine, add to or refine existing National Education Goals, part of the deliberation should include recommendations about monitoring the goals;
3. A new bureaucracy for monitoring the goals should not be created, but existing resources from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), the regional labs, the centers and other data gathering agencies should be coordinated for the purposes for monitoring the goals;
4. Standardized and multiple test questions should not be the source of goal monitoring instrumentation. Instead, more authentic instrumentation and data collection models should be developed which reflect the quality of schools;
5. We would find it useful if a legitimate model for assessing the quality of parental involvement could be devised;
6. State participation should be voluntary and costs of administration, implementation and overhead should be borne by the State;
7. Results of a report card should be "user friendly" and in a form that parents will be able to understand and use to recognize schools of excellence or schools that require improvement;
8. New instrumentation and assessment methods should be developed on a trial basis only; and above all,
9. Every effort should be made to assure maximum local participation and involvement.
10. The primary responsibility of the Report Card Bill is to develop models whereby parents and the community members are able to evaluate the quality of their own schools.
11. The Report Card council program shall be sunsetted after 5 years.

The National PTA thanks this subcommittee for the opportunity to state our views. I will be happy to answer any questions.

TESTING

It is the view of the National PTA that the primary purpose of testing should be to improve the education of children, and must be culturally and racially bias-free. All testing regulations and requirements must recognize the need for maximum State and local control regarding the determination of tests to be given, and the appropriate uses for the resulting data. Local school districts set a variety of educational objectives and should be held accountable to meeting them. Due to the diversity of the objectives, characteristics and factors, the National PTA opposes State-by-State comparisons.

While testing regulations must ensure the rights of parents and students to secure appropriate access to personal test data and protection of confidentiality in the use of test results, honest and full disclosure of relevant test information which can be legally released should be made available to the public.

Valid testing of achievement must be based on what has been taught and recognized as only one part of the process of measuring achievement. Standardized, multiple-choice tests should complement other methods of evaluating a student's achievement and not dictate a child's educational future. It is inappropriate to consider a single test as a determinant for scholarship aid or honors programs.

The National PTA is opposed to federally mandated standards of student performance and is opposed to federally prescribed and imposed measurement instruments because such responsibility rests with State and local governments.

The National PTA recommends that no one test be used as a determining factor for college admissions. The misuse of tests discourages many minority, female and low-income students from pursuing higher education. Consideration should be given to grade point averages, student accomplishments and strength of academic preparation through the preparation of a portfolio.

Senator BINGAMAN. Dr. Kronkosky, please go right ahead.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Good morning. My name is Preston Kronkosky, and I currently serve as Executive Director of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory headquartered in Austin, TX. However, today I appear before you in my role as this year's chairman of our national association, the Council for Educational Development and Research.

The council's mission is to support the congressionally created educational research and development institutions as they find ways, either through their own investigations or their evaluation and use of other research, to enable every American school child to be successful.

Mr. Chairman, improving the performance of our elementary and secondary school students requires many strategies. Some of these strategies involve the Federal Government. It is our hope that this bill will create more public awareness of the need for school improvement and sustained commitment and support for public education. Our comments today on the National Education Report Card Act of 1990 are directed toward this bill.

As Senator Bingaman is aware, I have already commented briefly on some aspects of this legislation during testimony last week before the Joint Economic Committee in Albuquerque, NM. Those comments, which represented my own personal perspectives, were considerably less exhaustive than those I am about to make on behalf of my colleagues and the council, and I request that the Senator not consider the two presentations as contradictions but rather as briefer and fuller discussions.

It is our firm belief that the public must stop policymakers from substituting school inspection for school improvement. By "inspection" I mean more tests, more reports, more press releases and more high-visibility meetings. If you examine who is designing the tests, who is reporting the test results, who is releasing the reports, who gets the press and who attends the meetings, you will readily see that much of the activity is directed toward top-down strategies devised by a small number of policymakers, private citizens and "education experts". There is virtually no grassroots participation in such inspection activities.

The result is the appearance of hustle and bustle at the national level. But most of this activity is directed at setting goals and designing inspection processes, with too little attention being paid to the Federal role and responsibility for meeting those goals. As a result, the policy stage has been set for the continued Federal disinvestment in school improvement activities.

Interestingly, much of this "inspection" business is usually couched in the language of "accountability" and often "local flexibility" or "school reform". Thus, thoughtful critics who take exception to the current process are often accused of not being accountable and against real change in our Nation's schools.

If there is to be wide public involvement in improving our schools, the public must have information about the level of achievement toward an accepted set of national goals and the strategies being used to meet them.

Thus we are delighted with the questions you asked in our letter of invitation to this hearing. We are pleased to have the opportuni-

ty to affect legislation that could help correct the current State of affairs.

Done well, this proposed legislation can bring local citizens into the process of developing consensus about and commitment to schools. It can make clear that school improvement is the responsibility of every level of government and every citizen, regardless of whether he or she has a school-aged child. It is time we recognize the profound interest our entire Nation has in the quality of our educational system and the school achievement of our children. Improving our schools is not only a parental responsibility but a civic responsibility as well.

You asked us whether a report card is a valuable instrument for moving schools toward improvement, and you asked us to advise you on the importance of the independent nature of the National Council on Educational Goals.

As now drafted, the National Education Report Card bill does not require that: (1) A report card contain information about school improvement strategies being used to achieve national goals; (2) the general public be meaningfully involved, or (3) the independence of the National Council on Educational Goals be guaranteed. In fact, as currently drafted the legislation could very well continue the old practice of a small group of "experts" setting education goals and telling educators and local communities to fix the problems. The council could in the name of objectivity take no responsibility for the messy process of achieving change. We do not believe you want this to occur; neither do we.

If you want to set a direction for school improvement, we urge that you make explicit in the legislation that the report card present data on what investments—human as well as financial—are being made to meet the national goals. Over time, this array of information will permit a public analysis of the success of the various improvement strategies. It is not useful to present data only on outcomes, playing no attention to inputs into the educational system.

If you want to create a grassroots dialogue about the goals in order to forge commitment to long-term, sustained school improvement, we urge that the legislation include a strategy to achieve that objective.

Finally, if you want to assure the independence of the Council on Educational Goals, we urge that the legislation address more precisely such issues as the membership of the council, where it is based, how it will generate information to determine its selection of goals and time lines, how the council will guarantee the creation of objective and sound data.

Specifically, our recommendations are as follows:

One, create an independent Council on Educational Goals. The council should consist of stakeholders in the education process. It should be representative of those people who have a direct interest in children's learning. It must also consist of individuals from groups who will be affected by the turbulence that often accompanies change in large, democratically oriented institutions.

This means that there must be business representation, parent representation, taxpayer with no school-aged children representation, education practitioner representation, State legislator repre-

sentation, and so forth. Education "experts" such as researchers, think tank and foundation personnel and academics should be kept in a purely advisory role or as staff to the council. It is important that the council represent people who are on the front lines in some capacity. These are the people who, as a result of their daily responsibilities, can judge the risks that must be taken to achieve national education goals.

To gather such a group, we recommend that the council members be appointed by policymakers representing four sectors: Three persons each should be appointed by the administration; the U.S. Senate; the U.S. House of Representatives, and a coalition of local and State elected officials from the National Governors' Association, the National Conference of State Legislators and the National School Boards Association.

Since we believe that a major objective of the report card should be to present information on the progress our schools are making in achieving our national goals, we also recommend that one person appointed by each of the four policy sectors be a practicing educator.

Further we recommend that the council be housed directly within the National Center for Education Statistics and be staffed by it, with the Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics serving as an *ex officio* member of the council.

The National Center for Education Statistics is the Federal agency charged with collecting education-related statistics. As with the other major Federal statistical agencies, the authorizing statute protects it from political interference. Furthermore, the National Center for Education Statistics is required by law to protect the confidentiality of the data it gathers.

We recommend that \$2 million a year for 5 years be authorized for council operations and that for the first year of operation, the National Center for Education Statistics be provided \$2 million and such funds as Congress appropriates for every year thereafter.

Recommendation number two. Charge the council with the task of generating a public consensus and commitment to an identified set of national education goals. It is counterproductive to simply establish another group to do the same task that the governors and the President did at the national education summit this past spring. These highly visible individuals have already made the case for national goals and established them. The council should continue what this group started by objectively broadening the debate, refining the goals, deepening the public's commitment to improving schools and redirecting the process so its major objective is genuine progress rather than finding fault.

A Gallup poll released late last month indicates that three-quarters of the adults polled attach a high priority to all six of the goals created at the President's education summit. However, this same poll indicated the people are profoundly skeptical about our ability to reach these goals within the decade.

We recommend that the council's primary tasks be the final determination of a set of national educational goals, the identification of strategies being used to meet the goals, and the analysis of progress being made toward achieving the goals.

Moreover, the council should carefully consider the format of the report card—what information would best advise the public, what data systems are available at the National Center for Education Statistics and elsewhere, as well as what are not, and the costs of such a reporting process. A report card should be released at regular intervals, perhaps yearly.

Recommendation number three. Each State should be given the opportunity to convene a State education summit and submit to the council an educational goals its set of State education goals. Certainly, the council should consider the goals established by the President and the Nation's governors. However, local and State-level perspectives are also valuable and should be considered.

One of the ironies of the current time line for achieving the present set of goals is that few if any of the governors will be in office in the year 2000, the year in which the goals are to be met. Neither will President Bush, unless between now and the end of the decade there is a constitutional amendment that permits him to serve more than two terms.

In a democratic system, long-term commitment comes only from a large-scale consensus. We recommend that Congress authorize \$10 million to be used as matching funds for States so that each governor can hold a State education summit. Such a State summit should involve a broad cross-section of citizens and educational groups to develop the long-term commitment to these goals at the State and local level.

Each State that holds such a summit shall submit a report on its goals and the school improvements that need to be made in the State to achieve these goals. Each State report should be submitted to the National Council on Education Goals, which will use it while deliberating recommendations for the design of a national report card.

The process would generate major grassroots discussion about what educational goals are appropriate for the Nation. It will help the council evaluate the level of local and State commitment to investing in strategies for improving schools. Funding ongoing grassroots deliberation will help keep public momentum behind the process.

There has been much publicity but little discussion about the goals established at the national summit last spring. This is worrisome. For the record, I have attached the thoughts of Dena Stoner, executive director of the Council for Educational Development and Research, on this subject. They will appear shortly in the council's magazine, *R&D Preview*.

Recommendation number four. The report card produced by the Federal Government should present a national picture. However, the format of the report card should make it easy for States and local schools to produce their own versions.

The cost of producing such a document could be prohibitive without careful attention to its uses. We recommend that the report card produced at the national level confine itself to the national picture. This will permit sampling strategies to be used in collecting data which in turn will allow much more data to be collected.

If a State or school district chooses to publish its own report card, as a number of States have done, the State or local school dis-

trict should pay the costs. However, the council will have provided two important things: (1) A format and standard for the kinds of information that a report card should contain, and (2) the establishment of national benchlines for student achievement data.

For example, there is a great deal of concern that national goals pertaining to subject matter mastery will lead to a national curriculum. This concern is heightened by suggestions that there be a national subject matter test or that the National Assessment for Educational Progress be funded so that it can be used for every school in the Nation. We recommend that you avoid this debate and keep the report card a national document. However, its design should be such that if a State wishes to pay the additional costs of generating school-by-school data, that such information can be gathered.

In summary, we must remember that committing a Nation to the achievement of national educational goals is both a political and a technical process. Of the two, the political process is the most important because this is the way the American people hold policymakers, educators and their public institutions accountable.

Of course, we must measure progress competently and report data accurately. But we must always and forever remember that the possession and the dissemination of timely, accurate data does not automatically lead to the problems being solved.

If improvement naturally followed data production and dissemination, the United States would be already well on its way to beating poverty, racism, inadequate housing, our dependence on foreign oil, and the Federal budget deficit.

Real problem-solving requires data about what needs to be done and then the political will and individual motivation to do it. If the national report card legislation generates consensus and long-term commitment to educational goals, it will provide us with significant support for that political will and motivation.

Thank you for asking the council to testify on this bill.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you very much for those comments. [The article provided by Dr. Kronkosky follows:]

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WE NEED DEBATE ABOUT THE GOALS

By Dena G. Stoner

It's too quiet. Seven years ago the National Commission on Excellence in Education pronounced that poor school performance placed our Nation at risk. No sooner was the report out than it engendered passionate debate.

I suspect the dialogue that took place in the press, in education groups, in business, in communities, and elsewhere after publication of *A Nation at Risk* produced as near a public consensus about education as we're ever likely to get. Poll after poll showed that Americans thought schools needed improving and that they were willing to pay for improvements. (Even if they thought it was other schools that were bad and their own were doing fine.)

We need this kind of spirited discourse in examining the education goals laid out by the president and the governors in Charlottesville. The goals may have been set by the nation's top executives, but their realization depends on the American people.

The president and the governors agreed on six goals to be achieved by the year 2000: "All children will start school ready to learn." "Ninety percent of high school

students will graduate." "All students will master basic skills." "U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics." "Every adult American will be literate." "Every school will be drug-free and safe."

These goals are as profound as anything that appeared in *A Nation at Risk*. They imply a major transfer of resources into schooling, the creation of a support system to help families prepare young children for learning, a curriculum revolution in science and mathematics, a broader war on drugs, and more emphasis on dropout prevention.

But so far the public has been hush. Few people are asking whether the goals are the right goals; whether we, as families, communities, and a nation, are willing to change our behavior to realize the goals; whether some of the goals might be contradictory; or where the resources will come from. Most Americans outside the education community could not even name the goals.

There are important reasons for national dialogue. Collective reflection is a legitimate part of our democratic process. It is a first step to building consensus and establishing broad-based ownership. True, dialogue may spark controversy, but controversy is less dangerous than silence—which may mean that nobody disagrees, but can also be a first symptom of apathy, alienation, and lack of commitment.

Dialogue is necessary also to create a clear course for action—especially if implementation is from the bottom. Local improvement is the result of many grassroots initiatives. The goals must be broken down into smaller, more manageable units and the public understand their role in the overall task. A lack of dialogue gives the citizenry little sense of what it could or should do to attain the goals.

Out of that dialogue, too, should come public understanding of the standards we need for schools. Pronouncements from on high will not achieve the goals. The goals will be achieved by public insistence that their own schools improve. The lack of understanding about what constitutes appropriate standards may well be why so many Americans are complacent about their local schools.

But rallying public support and achieving consensus on appropriate school standards is only half the battle. The other half is crafting a coherent way of realizing these standards. We need perspectives from the Congress, from the educational community, from State legislators, from business, from parents, and from taxpayers who have no children in school. This is the only way to marshal the commitment and resources that will sustain the long process of shifting our schools in a new, dynamic direction.

Much of the summit discussion focused on accountability and measuring progress toward the goals. We need accountability. But real improvements in education come from programs that produce better learning, not more assessment. It is unproductive to keep testing and testing in the hope that we can inspect the failures out of our educational system. A better investment is to design quality into the process. We know, for example, that science instruction is more effective when students learn concepts and methods in depth rather than hopscoatching their way through the discipline. We ought to make use of this critical research finding.

The governors accepted accountability for achieving the goals. Accountability means making substantial investments in the slow, hard job of improving instruction. But by the year 2000, the likelihood of very many of the officials who met in the spring of 1990 still being in office is near zero. New leaders will decide if they want to be accountable for their predecessors' goals and resource commitments. They are more apt to take up the banner if there is consensus from voters that the goals are important—so important that these same constituents are willing to take up the debate.

Note.—Dena G. Stoner is executive director of the Council for Educational Development and Research.

Senator BINGAMAN. Let me ask a few questions and then I'll defer to Senator Kerrey for his questions.

Dr. Kronkosky, could you specify how you believe, given the fact that the governors have set up their panel, and the administration, they have this panel that is going to design and issue a report card, what value does the kind of panel that you are now describing in this testimony have? How would it fit into that? You are talking about a panel which is made up much more from grassroots people who are in the trenches, either parents or taxpayers or teachers or educators. What would their job be? Would you see them performing a job in parallel with the job that the governors and the admin-

istration intend to perform, or assisting them; how do you see that working?

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Basically, what we are recommending is that we would replace theirs.

Senator BINGAMAN. You think this would be a more valuable way to proceed and persuade them that this would be useful.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Yes, sir.

Senator BINGAMAN. I think Ms. Fricke said that she thought the panel should be balanced and have on it some elected officials as well as people of the type that you described. Is that an accurate description of what you said?

Ms. FRICKE. Yes, that's correct. I would suggest that perhaps the panel, as suggested by Dr. Kronkosky, could even be advisory to the panel that has been set up by the governors and the President.

I think the thing is that we have had concern, and we have mentioned our concern to the people on that panel that we feel that they need the advice of the grassroots type of people, which they obviously don't have on that panel. So perhaps there would be a way to mesh the two so that that advice would be available to that group. We have some concern about that.

Senator BINGAMAN. OK. Ms. Waterman, did you have a thought as to how you integrate the two or combine the two, or should one not exist—what is your thought on that?

Ms. WATERMAN. Well, of course, as I said in the testimony, I am very concerned about the fact that the school districts are answering to two different panels and two different groups now. Your suggestion of grassroots is certainly something that needs to be done. Our concern right along has been that we've got too many things to answer to, and with the two panels here as proposed now with this bill and the governors, it is a concern.

Senator BINGAMAN. Given the fact—I guess it's a fact—that the governors and the administration have established their panel, is it your view that we should not proceed to establish another one?

Ms. WATERMAN. Yes.

Senator BINGAMAN. You would say do not go ahead with the kind of grassroots panel that Dr. Kronkosky described.

Ms. WATERMAN. Well, I am talking about S. 2034. My concern is that we've got two now being implemented or suggested or done. What he is doing—and I am agreeing that if something else is started, if something else is done, that his is a better way of doing it.

Senator BINGAMAN. But you still think that doing something else probably does not make sense in light of the fact that they've already got one in place; is that correct?

Ms. WATERMAN. Right.

Senator BINGAMAN. Dr. Kronkosky.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Mr. Chairman, if I may, when I made my recommendation, you remember I suggested that there be four different groups appointing three each. Each of those first three at least could make their own decisions about whom to appoint, and some of the persons that have already been appointed could be people like one of those three groups who maybe want to reappoint to the panel that we've been advocating. That's a possibility.

Senator BINGAMAN. So you are saying there is a possibility that what you are proposing could be integrated into what the governors and the administration have already done if they would modify what they have done.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. If the administration and the House and the Senate so wish, it is possible.

Senator BINGAMAN. OK. Dr. Kronkosky, you said that the report card should contain information on inputs, not just outcomes.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Yes, sir.

Senator BINGAMAN. Don't we already have some pretty good indicators on inputs? We discussed last week when we were in New Mexico the report that recently came out which essentially, as I understood it, tried to give each State a grade based on five or six inputs—wasn't that inputs?

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Yes, in some sense. It was a combination of inputs and outputs.

Senator BINGAMAN. What was that group?

Dr. KRONKOSKY. I honestly can't remember. I have the citation in my office.

Senator BINGAMAN. Anyway, it made big news in New Mexico when they came out and said that our State got a "D"—and so did your State.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. No, sir. Texas got an "F".

Senator BINGAMAN. Oh, that's right. Texas got an "F". I'm sorry.

At any rate, if we are looking for information that is useful in improving the school system, how valuable is it to assess those inputs as you are describing it? Maybe you could just elaborate a little bit on what you anticipate.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. The gentleman who just left obviously is the superintendent of one of the privileged school districts in this country. To compare this gentleman's school district and the achievement of its students with districts that I am familiar with in the five States that our laboratory works with in the Southwest would be, I think, a gross disadvantage. It would be a travesty on what I understand as comparisons.

You need to group districts, perhaps schools—certainly you ought to at least attempt to group States in terms of input variables because people with grossly different input variables will generally produce grossly different output results. And to not take the input and some of the educational processes that schools use into account and simply compare them on the basis of output, I don't think has helped the situation. You have perhaps exacerbated the situation. You haven't given meaningful data to point in which directions improvements should be made. And I am sending some material to your office on work that has been done over the last 15 or 20 years and ways in which you can do this. My own doctoral dissertation some 20 years ago focused on this area.

Senator BINGAMAN. Do either of the other witnesses have a comment on that?

Ms. WATERMAN. My concern and comment would be, Senator, so if you got an "F" and someone else got a "D", what did that tell you? What did you do about improving? So your people were upset. I can see that. "Fs" and "Ds" do not rate too high in the community—

Senator BINGAMAN. He got the "F"; we got the "D".

Ms. WATERMAN. Oh.

Senator BINGAMAN. I just wanted to correct the record on that. [Laughter.]

Ms. WATERMAN. Congratulations on your "D".

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you, thank you.

Ms. WATERMAN. Other than the community being very upset, what did you do about that "F" and "D"?

Senator BINGAMAN. Well, we just got the report last week so we're still trying to figure out what it means.

Ms. FRICKE. Now, Senator, you know how we feel when we are graded and expect immediate results within the next week or two.

Senator BINGAMAN. Let me just comment on this business of inputs and outputs. I can see the point you are making that you need to take into account the inputs, but from the point of view of a parent who has a child in the school, it is not a lot of consolation to me to know that my child is getting an inferior education because the inputs are all terrible. If in fact my child doesn't score as high as the children in Dr. Clausen's school district, then I need to know that, too, and maybe that will force me or prompt me to go to the PTA meetings and go in to see the principal and say, "We've got to do something or I'm moving my kids."

At some point, the idea that you are going to assess inputs can be put forward as a rationale for not really holding everybody to a high standard.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. No, sir, no, sir. I disagree with that. Let me point out that schools typically have very little control over many of the input variables, and in fact some of the most important variables that determine a child's success, the school has absolutely no control over them.

Maybe we as a society ought to look at that whole array of input variables and decide what additional resources and services and institutions ought to bring their resources to bear in the very beginning.

Everybody wants to help when a child is labelled a dropout or a failure. Then massive resources and reprogramming and all kinds of activities are put into place. If that level of effort had been applied in the earlier years of that child's and that family's life, the odds are that child would never be at risk.

Why can't we do the job right from the first?

Senator BINGAMAN. So you are saying that the report card should not just be on those factors which relate to the school but should be a broader indicator.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Yes, sir. The American family is in desperate trouble.

Senator BINGAMAN. And the report card should reflect the condition of the American family State-by-State or, if a State so chose, school district-by-school district, or school-by-school.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Yes, sir.

Senator BINGAMAN. OK. Let me defer to Senator Kerrey for questions, and then I may have a few others.

Senator KERREY. I would enter by asserting that the last statement that you made, Dr. Kronkosky, is a pretty good foundation upon which to proceed, and I agree that the American family is in

trouble and needs a lot of support. In fact, one thing that Dr. Clausen suggested was that even in an affluent district there is an understanding of that—the Children's Investment Trust that he referenced, I don't know what the details of it are, but I suspect is tracks with what I have discovered at home, and that is that although you may find greater family difficulties in the poorer districts, you will not find an absence of family problems or the need for support in the wealthier districts.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Agreed.

Senator KERREY. Let me also put what I think is an important foundational assertion out as to what my role in this is. As a member of the Senate, I am trying to shape some of the detail of the policy, but I am also charged with the responsibility of deciding how much money to spend. This is again back to what caught my attention about this whole thing at the beginning. And as a consequence you do get into a situation—if I spend \$12 billion on education, I've got to be able to answer my taxpayers—is it working. So as a result, I do put in place all kinds of mechanisms to test, all kinds of mechanisms to harass local school districts to find out whether they are spending the money properly. I mean, you do end up as a consequence of that with some things that sometimes work, as you said, Martha, at cross-purposes with our own objectives.

It seems to me that unless you've got that local community really committed and willing to sustain that commitment over a long period of time and work through all the problems that are there, and almost the guaranteed heartbreak of failing from time to time with a human being, that nothing that we put in place is going to be very successful.

And again, I am genuinely interested in making progress and feel an urgency to do it based upon the sense that we're just losing opportunities. Every, single minute that ticks away, there are opportunities being lost out there with young people.

I found in Dr. Kronkosky's testimony some outstanding suggestions for ways to improve Senator Bingaman's piece of legislation. As I said, I am willing to let the governors and the administration put their group in place, and I recognize the importance of having the Executive Branch there and enthusiastic, but I am very skeptical about the likely outcome of that unless the base is broadened. Given what they have done so far, I am skeptical that they are going to respond and broaden that base adequately. If they do, that's terrific. It can still work.

I've got a very specific question, Dr. Kronkosky. You selected an agency—I assume that is inside the Department of Education—

Dr. KRONKOSKY. The National Center for Education Statistics, yes, sir.

Senator KERREY. You assert that the center is required by law to protect the confidentiality of the data, and furthermore you say that the authorizing statute protects it from political interference. Are you comfortable with both of those two statements? I know nothing about this particular center.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Yes, sir. I equivocate simply because anything that is housed in an agency that ultimately reports to a political leader such as the President, etc., you always wonder if you can protect it perfectly from all political influence, but I think to the

degree that it is possible in authorizing legislation, the National Center is protected; and yes, it is charged by the Congress with maintaining the confidentiality of the data it collects.

Senator KERREY. Because it seems to me if that is true—and I'll assume that it is true because I have not evaluated that question at all—but assuming it is true, it seems to me that the suggestion has merit because it would enable the muscle of the Executive Branch to be used, which I think is very important, and the ability to be able to sustain this effort beyond the duration of all of our terms of office, which I also think is very important. I think your observation that the governors are apt to be gone is a very important one, because you get a new governor who comes in, and he says, what is this thing here that I've bought into; I didn't campaign on this. So it is tough to sustain it.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Right.

Senator KERREY. Your first recommendation—you talk about creating an independent council. You describe in the second paragraph what I think I heard both from the PTA and the school boards and from the superintendents, the need to broaden the base, because by the way, some of the more exciting things that are coming on in public education right now are coming as a consequence of corporate entities getting concerned and establishing grants and working to try to assist the schools.

You described something rather broad-based, and in fact as you described it, it sounded almost like an annual mini summit, to reassess the goals but also to continue to get the public involved, give them the opportunity to stay involved. But then, when you went into the next paragraph, it got back into the need to kind of narrowly select a small group of people.

And I guess I am intrigued that all three witnesses from the education sector seem to be putting some enthusiasm into this summit notion. I am just curious, Dr. Kronkosky, if you sort of visualize your recommendation as perhaps being an annual mini summit where the public has an opportunity to get involved again not only in the reassessment of the goals but to understand why they are there and what they are.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. That sounds excellent, Senator. That would be a great way of maintaining the momentum.

Senator KERREY. Because all of you recognize that these things have a way of dying. You make a report, and it gets filed, and the camera is off—the guy has left now; I was going to point to the cameraman, and he is gone—when the cameras were rolling, and the press were writing and putting the press releases out, and the public says, gee, Senator Kerrey cares about education, and so do I, and he said something about the taxpayers, and I am a taxpayer, so he is sensitive to that as well. I mean, it is possible for us to just kind of get by with a fairly small amount of effort here.

It seems to me that all three of you have some sort of sense about how to sustain this effort, and I'm looking for some way to sustain it—essentially, create a civic forum in America for education that can keep the pressure on the politicians so that we are trying, sometimes blindly, the way we are organized, to get genuine improvement.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Senator Kerrey, last week in Albuquerque Senator Bingaman used a word, and I immediately reacted to it. He used the word "persistence". One of the big problems is we don't persist, we don't follow through. We announce something, and it is like we immediately declare victor and go home. We need to be persistent. We need to follow through. And perhaps the idea of an annual mini summit, anything that will maintain the interest, keep the high level, keep the involvement, maintain the motivation, maintain the commitment from the grassroots so that people, whether they have children in school or not, realize it is in this country's best interest to educate every child to the best of his or her ability to achieve that education.

Senator KERREY. It would be of value to me to have superintendents, school boards and the PTA evaluate S. 2034 under the hypothetical that Dr. Kronkosky's recommendations were incorporated into it, because it seems to me that you have made some very, very worthwhile recommendations. At least as I listen to them described, they seem to connect with concerns that superintendents, school boards and the PTA have about either one of the recommendations, either the ones that the President and the governors have or the ones that are specifically laid out in 2034.

Ms. WATERMAN. Senator Kerrey, if I may add to the gentleman's remarks, we certainly believe that the grassroots effort is the only way that is going to sustain this movement, so we would be very supportive of mini summits, getting parents and educators and others in there to talk about schools. And if we don't keep this movement going, it is going to be lost, and the grassroots is where it is at.

Ms. FRICKE. We have to get the attention of the local people, and quite frankly I have to say it is my experience that we haven't gotten it yet. They have read the articles, they have seen what is going on, but to get a local school board or a local PTA to really discuss the national goals—it is not happening, it is not happening.

Senator BINGAMAN. I don't want to interrupt you, but we had a hearing last week out in Albuquerque on the question of how to achieve the goal that relates to math and science, saying that we are going to be first in the world in math and science by the year 2000. Do any of you know of any organization or any school board or school district or State board of education that has tried to put some flesh on that and say this is a plan of action to get from here to there?

Ms. FRICKE. No, sir.

Senator KERREY. And moreover, don't you hear tests on the way with that goal? When I say I'm going to be first in the world in mathematics, don't you understand that I've got to test every school district in America—first of all, I've got to determine what is first in the world, then I've got to get all the other world's countries to participate—don't you hear the footsteps of the testers heading toward the schools with that goal?

Ms. FRICKE. Yes, yes.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. You hear something else, Senator. You hear a movement that 15 years ago was just in the opposite direction. You hear a movement toward maybe it is time for this country to abandon its 200-year history of not having a czar or a minister of educa-

tion. You hear people beginning to say we need to have national goals followed by a national curriculum followed by national tests.

If that is what the American people want, let's have a public debate about it. Please, don't let this come in through the back door and suddenly, we have a czar of education with a national goal, national curriculum and national test, and it was never debated in the State capitals or in the national capital.

Maybe we should change our 200-year history and stance on that, but I would like to have a very open national debate before this country turns it back on what I think has been the strength of creating a democratically-educated citizenry.

Senator BINGAMAN. Well, I understand all the points that folks are making about being concerned that these goals will cause us to do too much, but the point I was trying to make was that these goals are causing us to do nothing. We are not having the debate, and we are not laying out plans of implementation, and there is nobody I have been able to find, at that hearing last week or otherwise, who would bet a plug nickel that we will be first in the world in math and science in the year 2000. There is just no plan to get us from here to there.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Senator Bingaman, as part of our recent proposal to the U.S. Department of Education to continue to be the regional educational laboratory serving the States of New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas, we did a thorough analysis of the goals that each of those five States had set for themselves over the last 12 months. It is interesting to see the connection or lack thereof between those five States' State goals and the national goals. If there is a connection, it is by accident. The national goals came after the five States set their own goals. That seems to me the inverse process, the reverse process. It ought to flow from the bottom up, with all the encouragement and all the trumpets, etc., that you can muster at the national level. But I think history has determined that unless the American people are really committed and feel like they were part of the fundamental decision, they walk away from somebody else's announced goals.

Look at us in Korea and Vietnam. Let's not make this something like that.

Senator BINGAMAN. Let me ask on another issue that was fairly clearly joined—I think both Ms. Fricke and Ms. Waterman made the point that they felt whatever was done in the way of a national assessment or a national report card or whatever it was, that it should be voluntary, that each State should determine itself whether it wanted to participate.

To elicit a response from you, I would just say I have a problem with that. I don't know how you have a national report card if you've got a bunch of States deciding they don't want to play. I don't mind having incentives to try to get them to play or participate or whatever, but one way or another, I think that if the thing is worth doing, it is worth doing for all the kids in the country; and if it is not worth doing, then we shouldn't do it.

Ms. FRICKE. Senator Bingaman, I didn't say that—

Senator BINGAMAN. Oh, you didn't say that.

Ms. WATERMAN. I said that.

Senator BINGAMAN. OK, Ms. Waterman did, okay.

Ms. FRICKE. But I would say that I do indeed think it has to include every State. I don't think there is any way that you could pick and choose, or "I don't want to play, thanks."

But the wall chart that has been going up for a number of years in the Department of Education, no one was given an opportunity to say "I don't want to be on the wall chart." So I think that—and this is my personal opinion—there is no way that you could pick and choose or States could pick and choose whether they wanted to be on it or not.

Senator BINGAMAN. Ms. Waterman.

Ms. WATERMAN. I think our concern, Senator, was are these the national goals; was there a buy-in from the general public and the States on these goals. That is why we supported calling a summit, H.R. 5115, to get people together to talk about these from the grassroots up, and that any report card on goals had to be something that was a buy-in by the general numbers.

I wanted to follow up on the gentleman at the end of the table because when we are talking about goals it has to be something that the community and parents have bought into. And I come from a district where every three or 4 years we go over our goals, and they are goals that are very interesting, and it would be very interesting how you would evaluate these goals. But the support of the school district financially and in resources otherwise is the evaluation of the tools because they buy these goals and they support them.

It says: "Educational goals for the Mentor, OH school district: Develop skills in reading, writing, mathematics, speaking and listening; gain a general education; learn how to examine and use information; develop pride in your work and your feeling of self-worth; learn how to be a good citizen; learn how to respect and get along with people with whom we work and live; develop a desire for learning now and in the future; learn about and try to understand the changes taking place in the world; understand and practice democratic ideas; develop skills to enter a field of work and to get information needed to make that job selection; learn how to be a good manager of money, property and resources; practice and understand the ideas of health and safety; appreciate your culture and health and beauty in the world; learn how to respect and get along with people who think and dress and act differently; understand the practice the skills of family living, and learn how to use your leisure time."

How do you have a report card on that, sir, and yet those are the goals—now, this is a district, I must tell you, that has been recognized by the United States Department of Education's Recognition Program six times, with another one coming up this year.

It is an area that has set its goals—it has worked with the community, the businesses and the parents—and that is what our goal-setting is.

When parents are empowered, when we have parent empowerment, however we are going to do that, when we have the community buy into our schools, not take them for granted, then we are going to make some movement. We have got to find that formula.

Senator BINGAMAN. I certainly agree with that.

Senator Kerrey, did you have additional questions?

Senator KERREY. Again, I would appreciate your comments on the recommendations that Dr. Kronkosky is making because it seems to me he is making some recommendations that could substantially improve 2034, at least in a way that I would like to get it done which is, as I said, not just telling Americans where we are, but telling them that it is possible to make improvements, and most particularly, keeping the pressure on the political leaders so that we are constantly trying to figure out what is going on in the schools and what we can do to create a better environment. I fundamentally believe that unless that local community is committed, there is nothing we can do from the top to substantially—other than in punitive ways, which are not terribly constructive—make things a great deal better.

Ms. WATERMAN. Senator Kerrey, the grassroots is the only way we are going to sustain this movement, and so mini summits held would be very important.

Ms. FRICKE. I would just like to say, Senator Kerrey—and in my testimony I said this—don't just grade; please, give recommendations. The people out there who are going to be ranked low need help, and so the idea of simply saying you are not doing this, your test scores are down—we also need recommendations. That is why I think this panel could be very important, because they could help to develop that. You can't just say, "You are flunking, and we'll come around next year and check you again." Those are the districts that need help.

Senator KERREY. But what I'm looking for—and it is a question for Dr. Kronkosky as well—is to make sure that whatever is empowered is willing—which is why I am skeptical of the one that is recommended by the President and the governors—to take the politicians on and to say "You are not doing the job. You are putting a lot of good words out there, but you are not getting the job done"—so that you've got the public clamoring for more.

Ms. FRICKE. That's right.

Senator KERREY. And again, beginning to believe—and it is no surprise to you—there is a large number of the public that just absolutely doesn't believe any effort is going to make any difference at all.

Ms. FRICKE. Right—and doesn't care.

Senator BINGAMAN. Did you have a comment, Dr. Kronkosky?

Dr. KRONKOSKY. I'd like to make four quick statements if I may. No. 1, I always worry about big brother telling everybody what to do, so I would be very concerned about the national government forcing all 50 States to have these State education summits. But if you put up \$10 million in matching moneys, it would be hard for any one of the 50 not to go along with it—

Senator KERREY. To interrupt you, let's say the Governor of Iowa holds a summit; it is going to be hard for the Governor of Nebraska not to.

Dr. KRONKOSKY. Correct, correct. So in that sense, it is voluntary to hold a State education summit.

No. 2, I never intend for my emphasis on identifying inputs to weasel out of accountability. All I'm trying to say is let's identify the inputs that have an effect on the outputs so we have a diagnostic to say where do we direct our attention; maybe we are spending

our money working on the wrong inputs to get the outputs that we want.

No. 3—and this may be heresy for anyone to say this, particularly one who is considered a professional educator—maybe we don't need massive amounts of new dollars; maybe we need rather to redirect what we are currently spending. We may be spending our dollars in the wrong places.

And finally, without having talked with these ladies in advance, I am very impressed with their testimony. We find it complements and supplements our testimony, and we are very pleased with their testimony.

Thank you for allowing me to be here today.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you.

Let me just comment in response to Ms. Fricke's point about recommendations. One of the things that came out in earlier hearings on this bill was the concern that this panel should have some credibility which would be a little more than the average credibility of a panel appointed to improve education in the country. The thought was that if they are going to be putting out a report each year throughout this decade that they should not get into making recommendations because if they get into making recommendations then there will be people who agree with those recommendations, there will be people who disagree; they will essentially have used up a lot of their credibility in the process of proposing some recommendations which may or may not work everywhere. And the thought was that the panel should do an assessment; it should determine what it thinks the situation is, and it should issue a report critiquing the present situation to the extent necessary, pointing out the deficiencies to the extent necessary and pointing out the strengths to the extent necessary, but not getting into the process of saying "Here is how you fix it."

Now, that was the testimony was got in earlier hearings, and I was somewhat persuaded that that made sense and that if we tried for this panel to be all things to all people, it would lose its credibility pretty quickly.

I don't know if you have a response to that.

Ms. FRICKE. Well, with apologies to Senator Kerrey, I would not appreciate it if Nebraska came out badly, and you just simply said, "You are very low in this and this and this; you might be strong in the good life, and you might be strong in something else, but your math scores are terrible," and you go away—that's not going to help me.

If you would say, "It is very important for the State of Nebraska to start putting the right kind of money into the right kinds of programs that they are not doing now," that would help me.

Senator KERREY. Let me get even more specific than that, Martha. In the area of deregulation, under the heading of deregulation—it is a great new buzz word; I use it all the time—we should just deregulate our schools, and then I hope nobody asks me what I want to deregulate because I immediately get into tough policy questions, which is what I would like to cite as an example.

In meetings that I had with 10 or 12 little groups of educators in Nebraska over recess, I heard about problems of meeting the requirements for asbestos, problems about meeting requirements for

special education. If you are going to deal with either one of those, it takes a lot of work.

Let's talk about asbestos, for example. How do I as a Senator reach a policy conclusion that enables a school in Crawford to be relieved of the regulatory burden that they've got right now—they have never had asbestos in their school, but they've got to get an inspection every year that shows that they are not using asbestos. Well, you can't buy asbestos, so how the hell are they going to put it in there? But how do I get that changed? It is extremely difficult to make that change.

So what I am looking for out of this group is somebody who can actually make recommendations that specific. But I agree that in many cases, redirecting resources is exactly what you need to do. But boy, when you are a superintendent out there or a principal out there running a school, it is hard to redirect. I mean, you've got directions that you've got to follow.

So what I'm looking for is somebody—again, I feel that with public education much of the time I am shooting blind at a target behind the wall, and every now and then somebody comes out and says to me, "Adjust left, adjust right"—I don't know what is going on in the classroom.

So what I'm looking for is somebody who can actually give you precise information, who can say, "Make this change, and we think things will get better"—inside the State of Nebraska, not for the Nation as a whole, but inside the State of Nebraska where I live and worth.

Ms. FRICKE. Agreed.

Senator BINGAMAN. Does anyone else have a comment they want to make on any aspect of this.

Yes, Ms. Waterman?

Ms. WATERMAN. About 3 minutes ago, I had a thought, and I hope it is still there. We were talking about the goals and people not buying into them, or saying they are fine and they are wonderful. Well, if you look at the six goals, who would not agree that "by the year 2000, all children should start school ready to learn; by the year 2000, high school graduation rate will increase at least 90 percent; by the year 2000, American students will leave grades four, eight and twelve competent," and it goes on and on.

And while the Gallup poll says that the American people certainly believe that those are worthy goals, 90 percent of them do not think they are attainable.

So as we work to improve our schools and we begin—and hopefully have begun before today, but certainly if not, let's begin today—parents need to find a mechanism that will be helpful in not just grade A, B, C, D, but how can we improve; what does it mean after you have graded us, you with your Ds, and you with your Fs. What are you going to do about it?

We need to have something that allows us to be empowered to do something about that. And this association for its 93 years has been what we call a parent education organization, trying to get parents involved in the education of their children, and in some areas we are very successful, in other areas we need a lot of help. And I would hope that that help would come not only locally and

statewide, but from the Federal Government, to say yes, parents are important. We need you. We cannot do it without you.

And if I can just add with slight humor, I watched the CBS report the other night. I stayed up until 4:00 a.m., waiting to see a parent panel, or my president Ann Lynch, the president of the National PTA, saying something to the Nation, even if it was at 4:00 a.m. At 4:00 a.m., I turned it off because we were preempted by a movie.

It just says that as we talk about education, as we try to do what we can, that somewhere along the line, parents are not empowered, and we've got to have that empowerment; we've got to feel needed and wanted.

Thank you for allowing me to come today.

Senator BINGAMAN. Well, thank you for those comments.

Senator Kerrey, did you have any other questions?

Senator KERREY. No.

Senator BINGAMAN. I think this was very useful. We appreciate the testimony, and we will adjourn the hearing and hope to do something on this issue in the next few weeks.

[Additional statement submitted for the record follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

The National Education Association represents 2 million professional and support education employees in the nation's elementary, secondary, vocational, and postsecondary schools. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on a proposal to maintain the interest and commitment to improving the quality of education in the United States—the National Report Card Act of 1990, S. 2034.

The concept of establishing a panel to assess progress on the national goals in education, endorsed by President Bush and the nation's governors, has become an issue of national attention and some controversy.

From the beginning, NEA has supported the idea that the best way to maintain the integrity of the National Goals in Education is to establish a panel that meets the following criteria:

- *It must be independent*, accountable only to the nation and with a separate status from both the White House and the National Governors' Association.
- *It must be nonpartisan.*
- *Panel members must be selected through a multi-level process* involving the President, the governors, and the Congress.
- *The members of the panel should add stature and prestige to its efforts*, including well-recognized experts on education and related issues, such as child development and workforce needs.
- *The panel should endure for more than a decade* in order to assure assessment at least through the time the goals are to be accomplished.
- *The panel must provide a qualitative analysis of national progress toward the goals*, rather than focusing excessively on quantitative comparisons removed from their context.
- *The panel must have the resources, staff, and technical expertise required to carry out its mission.*

In an ideal world, we would hope these would be the components of such a panel. The fact is, considerable movement toward establishing a structure for a national panel has already taken place. The governors and the White House agreed to an organization for assessing progress on the national goals at the summer meeting of the National Governors' Association, and the House has already passed legislation, H.R. 5115, that would set up a different structure. This committee is considering yet another approach.

Within this framework, NEA urges this committee to adopt two key principles:

First, the purpose of any efforts to establish a panel, council, or national committee on assessment must be on achieving the National Goals in Education. Energy and time spent debating the composition of the panel itself divert us from the press-

ing need to get on with the business of adopting policies and programs that bring American schools closer to the goals.

Second, there should be only one panel. Multiple panels are likely to lead to constant conflict among the participants who set education policy.

The best way to resolve these disputes is for the participants to get together to work this out in a positive way. NEA believes that Congress plays an essential role in our nation's education policy through its ongoing support for such keystone programs as Head Start, health and safety, nutrition, health care, and the full range of programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education. Moreover, Congress continues to play an important part in efforts to expand educational excellence and equity by establishing national programs that help local governments meet the needs of children and families.

We applaud the leadership of Senator Bingaman for his efforts to maintain attention on public education. Establishing a means to assess schools' and governments' progress on the national goals in education is essential to assure that policymakers and the public at large remain committed to meeting the goals.

Recently, Senator Bingaman appropriately emphasized the need for independence, nonpartisanship, and involving persons who would add stature and prestige on such a panel. As he stated, "If this panel were to be free to do its job professionally and credibly it would have to be independent and be comprised of a diverse group of distinguished individuals widely recognized for their experience and commitment to educational excellence." Further, Senator Bingaman stated, "Unfortunately, the governors and the President chose to ignore the need for an independent panel . . . They have made arrangements so that they, and no one else, would be the judge of their own work. . . . Public policy should be directed by concern for the public and elected officials should not be immune to criticism for their policies."

NEA strongly agrees that policymakers should be held accountable.

The independence of the assessment panel is essential to developing an appropriate framework for judging progress. NEA is concerned that the criteria used to judge progress on the national goals not be so narrow as to undermine the broader purposes of public education.

Arthur Wise, director of the RAND Corporation's Center for the Study of the Teaching Profession, commented on hazards of development assessment mechanisms that do not keep a balance between output and process. In "Rich Schools, Poor Schools," published in the *College Board Review*, Spring 1989, Wise wrote, "If a State regulates outputs, it may create an obsessive concern with test-score performance. As multiple-choice, predictable tests become the driving force of the curriculum, their subject matter and question format become classroom fixtures. Teachers spend hours drilling students on identifying antonyms, multiplying fractions, and filling in answer sheets, focusing on little that is richer, broader or deeper. . . . Individuality, creativity and depth are lost; all that is retained is uniformity, conventionality and trivial skills."

"If a State regulates process, it becomes embroiled in regulating nearly ever aspect of what goes on in schools. Local boards and teachers are left no choice but to slavishly implement the minutiae dictated from above. Citizens are frustrated that they have no input into their child's education; teachers become discouraged because their professional judgment is overruled or unused; students become bored or dispirited because the fare they are fed is inappropriate to their personal needs."

It seems inevitable that a national assessment panel will want to collect and analyze data on student achievement—as measured in standardized tests. But such testing should not present a burden upon either students or schools. As NEA President Keith Geiger has stated, "We could do a lot of testing randomly and determine how we are progressing. We don't need to assess every child."

Further, the assessment panel—and those who use the information, whether media, policymakers, or the general public—must avoid the trap of invidious comparisons. Results should be focused on progress within a State, based on benchmarks within the State, not State-by-State comparisons. By themselves, such rankings provide little guidance or insight into how or why one State performs, on the average, "better" than another.

Any national assessment panel must not become overly focused on data, nor should it prescribe methods. Rather it should take a global view of education and the environment in which it takes place.

The United States has made significant progress in education over the last half century. Between 1969 and 1987, the percentage of Americans with eight or fewer years of school fell from three-quarters to one-third. Over the same period, the percentage of Americans with at least four years of college rose from around 4 percent to more than 10 percent. American public schools have made a place for racial and

ethnic minorities, disabled youth, and students with limited proficiency in English—students who were previously denied access to educational and economic opportunity.

Many of these strides have been made possible thanks to the success of such essential federal programs as Head Start, Chapter 1 math and reading programs for disadvantaged students, bilingual education, and postsecondary student aid. Many States and communities would not have come as far as fast as they have, were it not for the resources, encouragement, and attention of the Federal Government.

And yet, this progress is not readily revealed from narrow statistical data—such as State-by-State comparisons of SAT scores. A national assessment of educational progress must include quantitative and qualitative information about such broader issues as the depth of parental involvement; the availability of preschool education and child care programs; access to and coordination of nutrition, health care, and counseling programs; the dynamics of the school administration and interstaff relationships; and testing programs. The assessment should also describe the availability of resources and its impact on the ability to attract and retain qualified staff, educational technology, class size, and other essential elements of quality education.

The adoption of national goals in education—the result of an historic summit between the President and the nation's governors—marked an important first step in assuring that excellence and equity do become the bywords of the United States. But unless Americans and their elected representatives take these goals seriously, and ensure that schools are equipped to meet these goals, the education summit will become a footnote, rather than the opening of a distinct chapter in the history of American education.

[Whereupon, at 11:19 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

